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Western Theological Seminary

The REFORMED REVIEW



The Reformed Church in America

A Quarterly Journal of the
WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Holland, Michigan

April, 1956

Volume 9

Number 3

The Reformed Review

Volume IX HOLLAND, MICHIGAN, APRIL, 1956 Number 3

A Quarterly Journal of the
Western Theological Seminary
(Formerly THE WESTERN SEMINARY BULLETIN)

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THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST AS A MODE OF TEACHING

BRUCE M. METZGER

1. BIBLICAL MIRACLES IN GENERAL

Before giving direct consideration to the subject itself, it will not be out of place to deal with certain preliminary matters regarding Biblical miracles in general. First of all, it may perhaps be appropriate to suggest a definition of a miracle. An old definition which will serve as a working hypothesis runs as follows: "A miracle is an event in the external world that is wrought by the immediate power of God." This definition, it should be pointed out, does not imply that other events are not attributable to the power of God. On the contrary, we may believe that ordinary events depend ultimately on the power of God just as much as miracles do. There is this difference, however; in the case of ordinary events God uses means, what we call the order of nature, to bring those events to pass. But in the case of miracles, according to this definition, he does not rely upon secondary causes, but puts forth his creative power as he put it forth when first he made all things of nothing.

With regard to the miracles in the Bible as a whole, some people have a quite mistaken notion. They imagine that the Bible is simply crowded with narratives of miraculous events; that almost every page of the Bible tells of a miraculous act of God. Actually, however, this is far from being the case. In the Bible miracles are confined almost entirely to four periods of time, separated from each other by centuries. These four periods are (1) the time of the redemption of God's people from Egypt and their establishment in Canaan under Moses and Joshua. (2) The life-and-death struggle of the true worship of Jehovah with Baal-worship during the days of Elijah and Elisha. (3) The Exile, when the Lord afforded proof of his power and supremacy over the gods of the heathen, although his people were in captivity (Daniel and his companions). (4) The introduction of Christianity into the world. During these four periods God put forth his immediate power in the effecting of miracles, and — so far as we know — during most of the remaining centuries of the long intervals of Biblical history, he did not do so.

2. THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

When a skeptic asks a Christian why he believes that Jesus performed certain deeds which are called miracles, doubtless many satisfactory answers can be given. For one thing, it can be pointed out that the authors of the Gospel accounts impress an impartial reader as honest, truth-telling

men. Second, the enemies of our Lord acknowledged that he performed supernatural works. Not only is their testimony given in the New Testament (e.g. Matt. 12:22-28), but in the Jewish Talmud as well (e.g. Sanh. 43a; cf. Morris Goldstein, *Jesus in the Jewish Tradition*, 1950, pp. 27 ff.). Here in the mouths of unwilling witnesses is testimony that Jesus accomplished supernatural works. To be sure, his enemies attributed his power to the devil or to a knowledge of magic (so the Talmud), but they did not deny that he possessed power to perform wonders. Third, the contrast between the accounts of miracles in the canonical Gospel and those in the later apocryphal gospels (from the second to the fifth centuries) is instructive. The obviously legendary tales of Jesus' wonder-working activity, as related in the literature of the sub-apostolic church, are patently different from the restrained and chaste accounts of miracles in the New Testament. A reading of these later documents in the admirable edition prepared by M. R. James (*The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford University Press, 1924) will undoubtedly enhance one's appreciation of the truthfulness of the Biblical records. Fourth, the narratives of Jesus' experience of temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1 ff.) must be interpreted as evidence that he could and did perform miracles. That he was tempted to change stones into loaves of bread shows that he possessed power to effect such a change. We are never tempted to do so because we cannot turn stones into bread. The whole narrative of the Temptation collapses if Jesus could not, and did not, work miracles. It is incredible that anyone should have told such a story about himself to persons who knew that he had never done any mighty work. It is equally incredible that anyone should invent such a story about a person who had never been known to do anything of the kind. Fifth, the most significant consideration of all is the Incarnation: if Jesus of Nazareth was in fact what the New Testament documents in all their strata indicate him to be, and what the church has always confessed him to be, namely God incarnate in human flesh, then it would be surprising if he, being God incarnate, never performed a miracle. In the light of the central miracle of our faith, the Incarnation, all other miracles fall into their proper perspective.

These preliminary comments may be sufficient as background material for a consideration now of the miracles of Jesus as a vehicle of his teaching.

3. THE FUNCTION OF JESUS' MIRACLES

The Evangelic narratives indicate that Jesus taught both by his words and by his works. As much in his mighty acts as in his gracious words did our Lord reveal the saving purpose of God. Indeed, so confident was he that men could find in his miracles the self-evident tokens of the nearness of the Kingdom of God and of his own part in its coming that, when his words were inadequate to convince his hearers, he appealed to

his works (see John 14:10f, especially verse 11, ". . . or else believe me for the very works' sake"). His miracles, like his speech, were full of grace because they, too, were a vehicle of the revelation of God's redemptive will and power.

To those who had eyes to see, Jesus' miracles revealed that in him God was at work ushering in the Messianic age. When, for instance, John the Baptist inquired whether Jesus was "he that should come," Jesus bade John's messengers to tell their master "those things which ye see and hear," and it is implied that they were seeing and hearing a number of things which clearly fulfilled certain prophecies of the coming Messianic age (Matthew 11:2-6). Jesus expected that people, seeing him give sight to the blind, new limbs to the lame, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead, would recognize that in him God had begun to do what he had long ago promised through his prophet (Isaiah 35:3-6; see also Isaiah 26:19; 29:18f.; 61:1). The individual miracles pointed to the supreme Messianic miracle in which the power of the living God was exercised through the agency of the Messiah in rescuing men from the grip of the powers of evil. In Jesus, God's kingdom had drawn near, and his deeds were tokens of the imminence of that Great Day of the Lord, the Day foretold by prophets of old, in which God himself would come and deliver his people. In other words, Jesus' miracles were as much a proclamation of the Good News that God loves and will save — nay, is now saving — his people as were his words in parable and preaching.

Quite in accord with this representation of the function of miracles in Jesus' ministry are his sorrowful words of condemnation. Inability to perceive the true significance of his deeds was regarded by our Lord as equivalent to rejection of his Gospel. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! . . ." (Matthew 11:20f. and Luke 10:13). The people, Jesus complained, were able to interpret the signs of the sky and so to forecast the weather, but they lacked spiritual discernment of the import of his presence and works (Luke 12:54-57). In short, Jesus' working of miracles is part of his proclamation of the Kingdom of God; as such he expects that they will awaken, not mere amazement, but real repentance.

Let us now examine, from the point of view of the wider Messianic function, all of Jesus' miracles which are recorded in one of the Gospels — the Gospel according to John.

4. JESUS' MIRACLES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Of all our Lord's mighty works, John selects only seven or eight typical miracles from the whole ministry of Jesus. (It will be explained

later why we cannot be certain whether the Fourth Gospel records exactly seven or exactly eight miracles.) He knows indeed that Jesus performed many other miracles besides these seven or eight (John 20:30f.), but in these few he finds the deepest expression of God's mysterious and gracious coming to mankind in the Person of his Son. John's favorite word for Jesus' miracles is *sēmeia* ("signs"). He uses the Greek word (which the King James Version unfortunately does not always render literally) seventeen times—which is more often than any of the other Evangelists' use of the word. By designating Jesus' miracles as "signs," John wishes to lead his readers to look beneath the outward event to the deeper revelation of the character, will, and work of God. That is, the significance of each miracle is not exhausted by its temporal and geographical circumstances; Jesus' miraculous work is declared to be a signpost that directs attention beyond the *sēmeia* themselves. In short, since they are "signs," miracles constitute a manifestation of the truth behind the symbolism of the individual deeds.

The first miracle which, John says, Jesus performed was the turning of the water into wine at the wedding at Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11). In what respect does this "sign" point beyond itself to the total work of God in Christ? In the symbolism of the Scriptures, wine suggests that which "makes glad the heart of men" (Psalm 104:15). Thus, by this first miracle, Jesus indicates the nature of his whole work, namely in bringing the Gospel, or good news, he renews and "makes glad" all of life. The Christian knows that where Jesus comes today, there he brings joy and gladness. Just as at Cana long ago, when he changed plain, common water¹ into excellent wine, so he transforms our dull, routine lives into joyous lives of Christian gladness. Furthermore, this preliminary miracle, worked upon the water set aside for purificatory rites of Jewish ceremonial, is symbolic of our Lord's whole work in transmuting the highest and best of the old covenant into the pure wine of his Gospel. It indicates in deed what Jesus on another occasion expressed in words: "I came not to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17)—that is, to *fill* the laws of the Old Covenant *full* of new meaning. Besides all this, the miracle reveals that Christ is not satisfied with helping us to a small degree. His extravagant goodness and overwhelming bounty are mirrored in the creation of

¹In the Scriptures one occasionally finds the same image used to represent opposites. Thus (1) Jesus is called "the lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5), while also the Devil is said to go about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8); and (2) "leaven" usually symbolizes evil, but in Matt. 13:33 it is recognized by most expositors to refer to the Gospel. Therefore one ought not to be surprised that in the account of the miracle at Cana "water" represents what is commonplace while elsewhere it is used to refer to the benefits which Christ promises (John 4:14 and 7:38).

about 125 gallons of wine for a country wedding—surely a great abundance far beyond the actual needs! By drawing attention to the immense quantity of wine, the Evangelist has in mind the fullness which we who believe in Jesus receive from him. In all these ways, then, it appears that John found significance in Jesus' first miracle. In fact, he declares that in this *sêmeion* Jesus "manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (2:11).

After showing the nature of Jesus' work, John wants us to learn in the second of Jesus' miracles what is the condition prerequisite to sharing in his benefits. It is faith. In the healing of the nobleman's son at Capernaum (John 4:46-54), Jesus indicated that his blessings are appropriated only by faith. Moreover, the effects of faith may extend beyond the person who exercises it. The nobleman believed (verse 50) and his son was benefited. Furthermore the greatness of his faith is shown when one considers the circumstances. Cana, where the nobleman found Jesus, was about fifteen miles from Capernaum, the nobleman's home. Jesus healed the boy at about 1:00 P.M. (verse 52), but the nobleman did not return to his home on that same day, as he could easily have done, to check the validity of Jesus' word. He waited until the next day, evidently confident that what Jesus had said about his son's recovery was true. That is, his faith was so strong that he did not think it was necessary to confirm that day by sight what Jesus had declared had taken place.

John so specifically designates these miracles as being the first and second "signs" which Jesus did that we must conclude he wants his readers to observe that at the very beginning of his ministry Jesus revealed the fundamental characteristics of his Gospel. From the outset, Jesus disclosed by means of two "signs" both the transforming nature of the Gospel and the condition for its appropriation.

The other miracles in John's Gospel also function as signs. Taken together they are symbols of the manifold working of Christ for our welfare in time and eternity. Doubtless the Evangelist was led to select those miracles which he felt best exemplified the Lord's work in providing for the restoration, the support, the guidance, the light, and the life of men.

As Jesus healed the impotent man by the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15), so God in Christ has healed each Christian, supplying him with strength and removing the debilitating effects of sin.

In the fourth miracle which John records, the feeding of the five thousand (6:1-15), he carries the symbolism one step further. Man needs not only restoration, but also support; he has wants as well as defects. After multiplying the loaves, our Lord interpreted his act by declaring, "I am the bread of life." That is, he is sufficient to supply the

craving of man. Further than this, Jesus implies that he is absolutely indispensable. Why did he not say, "I am the cake of life"? Doubtless because cake is not a necessity but a luxury. Man can get along without cake, but not without bread; therefore Jesus declared, "I am the *bread* of life." That is, Jesus declared by sign and by word that only he can and will provide for our needs.

The assurance that Christ will guide us safely through life's storms is taught by the next of Jesus' miracles which John records. The miraculous feature appears not only in Jesus' walking on the sea (John 6:16-21), but also in the circumstance that, after the disciples had received Jesus into their storm-tossed craft, immediately they reached their destination ("immediately the ship was at the land whither they went").

Like the man who gained his sight at Siloam (John 9:1-12), in one sense we all are blind from our birth. We need not only support and guidance; we need enlightenment also. With this "sign" Jesus gave a word of explanation: "I am the light of the world" (verse 5). Apart from him we walk in darkness, but in his light we see light. (Another Evangelist also realized that Christ is the light of men; Matthew discovered that Jesus fulfilled the prophetic word of Isaiah: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isaiah 9:2, compare Matthew 4:14-16).

In the seventh miracle which John records, the raising of Lazarus (John 11:17-44), our Lord shows that he has sovereign power over man's chief foe — death. And with the "sign" he also speaks words of assurance: "I am the resurrection [not, "I promise," or "I procure," or "I bring," but "I *am* the resurrection"] and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (verses 25, 26).

After apparently drawing his Gospel to a close (John 20:30f.), the Fourth Evangelist adds an appendix (Chapter 21) and supplies an eighth narrative, the draught of fishes, which may or may not be intended to be miraculous. (No word signifying "miracle" is included in the account.) On the one hand, the situation may not have involved a miracle, for perhaps the risen Lord could see from where he was standing on the shore that a school of fish was swimming toward the right side of his disciples' boat and so directed them to cast the net on that side where presently they would fill their nets. On the other hand, it may be that when the author draws attention to the great number and the large size of the fish (verses 6 and 11), he wishes to imply that a miracle has occurred. In any case, whether miraculous or not, by this incident John would have us learn that only when Christ directs our labor can we

enjoy success in the Christian life. Toiling by ourselves, we accomplish nothing; but when we heed the words of the risen Lord, he crowns our vain efforts with greater rewards than we had any right to expect.

CONCLUSION

Thus, each of the seven or eight miracles in the Gospel according to John points beyond itself to what Christ is able and willing to do for his people today. Furthermore, not only as individual "signs" do they convey their wider teaching, but also when considered together they collectively reveal the wide-ranging grace of God suited to all our needs for time and for eternity. By his selection of just these miracles out of many which he knows that Jesus performed, and by the sequence in which he has arranged them, John tells, successively, (1) that the transforming power of Christ brings joy to perplexed hearts; (2) that his blessings are appropriated only by faith; and that the manifold working of Christ involves (3) his empowering of the impotent; (4) his providing for those who hunger after righteousness; (5) his sure and safe guidance for those frightened by life's storms; (6) his illuminating the spiritually blind; and (7) his overcoming death. Finally (8) by obedience to the commands of our living Lord, we are assured of prospering in all our Christian labors.

SYMPOSIUM ON EDUCATION

Introductory Statement

A perplexing issue to a number of Reformed folk today is that referred to most generally as the Christian School versus Public School problem. In the simplest and most practical terms the issue may be resolved into a question: Where should I, as a Christian of the Reformed persuasion, send my child for his education, to the so-called Christian Schools, or to the schools provided by the government out of public funds? The word "should" in this question has more than a superficial significance, meaning something like "must." This hypothetical parent is assumed to be not only a concerned parent, but a concerned Christian. He wants to do what he believes the will of God demands of him. Therefore he *must* do the right thing. However, Christian leaders are obviously divided on the question or issue that confronts them. Some are insisting that sincere Christian parents can do no other than send their children to the Christian elementary and high schools, and if on to college, by all means to a Christian college. Others are equally insistent that Christian children are to get their Christian instruction and training in home and church, and that the public schools are entirely adequate to provide instruction and an acceptable environment for all children. Strong arguments are marshalled on both sides of the question, so strong that many a parent finds himself unable to decide which is the more correct, and therefore the more right. The editorial committee of *The Reformed Review* has felt that greater clarity in the discussion might be achieved if advocates of the two points of view had their arguments placed side by side. It has therefore requested four ministers of the Reformed Church in America to state their case for education, two of them speaking for the Christian School position, and two for the Public School position.

In keeping with the policy of our quarterly this discussion is carried on within the framework of Reformed Theology with the Scripture as final authority. We ask you, the reader, to consider the argument in the symposium which follows and we trust that you will come to an understanding of what you "must" do.

PUBLIC SCHOOL VERSUS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

ISAAC C. ROTTENBERG

The terms "christian," "public," and "school" indicate such various spheres as the Church, the State, and education; they point to the realms of revelation, the nation, and culture. In other words, our topic poses the indeed formidable and perplexing question of how we must conceive of the inter-relationship between such realities as the revelation of the historically acting God, the Church and the gospel of the kingdom, the nature and function of the State, and the manner and form in which the cultural life of the people is expressed. These are, in my judgment, some of the primary dimensions in which the problem under discussion must be viewed. These were also the realities and dimensions in which the apostolic church moved, when in obedience to the commission of her Lord, she went out to the nations, baptizing and teaching, and proclaiming with prophetic ardor the mighty acts of God. Without having formulated as yet what we would call an articulate "philosophy of culture," still, by her very witness, she profoundly influenced subsequent cultural developments.

Thus, without wishing to deny the urgency of the question as to what type of school I should send my child, I have tried to indicate in the above paragraph what I deem the proper perspective from which the question must be viewed, taking account of the larger issues that are at stake. It is my impression that too frequently these broader perspectives are ignored, or lost sight of, in the discussions on this important matter. This is most unfortunate, for one would expect that both the scriptural revelation by which we seek to be guided, as well as the events of the day, would simply force them on our attention. As is indicated by the word "ought" in the introductory paragraph to this symposium, we seek to move beyond the level of personal preference and taste, or mere convention. We seek to listen to the Word, and the totality of its message concerning the dealings of God with the world, which, in conformity to Scripture itself, can perhaps best be described as "the message of the kingdom." The "I-and-my-child" relationship must then be viewed in the larger context of the historical-eschatological acts of God, and his dealings with the world in which he is establishing his kingdom.

The God of the Bible is the historically acting God. The fact of the revelation does not exclusively, or even primarily, mean that he has said so many things, though he has done that too, but that he *does* so many things. He is the Lord, ruling even the times and the destinies of nations. Of these things the Church has knowledge, and of these things she speaks. In history, but from a perspective that transcends history, she presents her witness; in the midst of the changing social-political move-

ments and cultural patterns she proclaims the truth that human history is not merely *human*. And in a very fragmentary, but still very real sense, the whole history of the Occident, since that message was first proclaimed on its shores, witnesses to the fact that the prophetic proclamation of the Church has not remained without effect. The Word of God indeed did not return to him empty. The "extra dimension" which is introduced into existence by the revelation reflects itself somehow in the cultural life of the people among whom it is preached. The development of education in the West, for example, is probably inexplicable without the witness of the Church.

The above observations may seem quite unduly complicated, however, or even irrelevant to the question under discussion, when one considers the assertion from the side of many Christian school proponents that the school is *exclusively* a parental responsibility. With the utmost confidence it is affirmed that it belongs to the "eternal principles of the Word of God" (how glibly we operate with such categories!) that this is the case; the school is seen as a kind of extension of the home. From this axiomatic position it is only a short step to the next proposition, namely that the parents have obligated themselves by the baptismal vows to secure Christian schools for their children. From infant baptism a straight line is thus drawn to the Christian school! These views, together with the idea of the antithesis, which we must consider presently, form, in my judgment, the ground pillars of the Christian school movements in Reformed circles.

In the above structure of things matters become indeed simpler and, let us say, easier to "handle." I question, however, whether the scriptural witness concerning these matters can be made to fit such a neat scheme. First of all, where really lies the heart of baptism? Is it not in that which precedes all human promises, namely the promises and the faithfulness of the historically acting God, who deals with people and their seed, and the generations to come? Does this aspect of the divine role in baptism still point so directly in the direction of the Christian school, or perhaps at least as much in the direction of the nation? I would also deny that the baptismal vows are a pledge to support a program of separate Christian schools. And has, according to Reformed confession, this child not been received into the Church of God? Or is, by any chance, also the educational responsibility of the Church a function delegated by the parents to the Church? And finally, can it be said in such an unqualified fashion, that the child in no sense "belongs" to the people and the nation? We do not, of course, mean this in the sense of the totalitarian State, but in the sense of the biblical view of man and society.

Nothing can be gained by minimizing the fundamental responsibilities of the parents in the education of their children. These rights and respon-

sibilities the State will have to respect also. But it seems to me that nothing can be gained either by closing our eyes to the wider implications of education in modern society, and the chronic problem of the nature and function of the State, by simply withdrawing ourselves from the cultural life of the nation, retreating into what the Dutch scholar Van Ruler calls a Christian "ghetto culture." Incidentally, any slavish attempts to copy Dutch policies in America are, in my estimation, bound to fail. Yet, a study of the Dutch eighty-year struggle for Christian education, the policies and practices that have resulted from it, and the still continuing controversies and debates, can be helpful in our own search for the course we ought to pursue. To those who so diligently seek to follow the Dutch Neo-Calvinistic views, I would suggest, however, that they also lend an ear to some of the things Van Ruler and other critics of this movement have to say.

I would plead for a more prophetic approach to the problem of education than the one indicated above. The Church preaches to all men, and it makes known the wisdom of God to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places (Col. 3:8-10). And somewhere in this field of prophetic operation and radiation is the realm of human social-political and cultural activity. And somewhere in the realm of culture is the important province of education. And in the midst of these historical realities and creative movements stands the Church, proclaiming the Word, the living Word of God.

Perhaps this all sounds too visionary, irrelevant for our contemporary situation or the issues under discussion. Perhaps this also seems a "devout imagination," as Regent Murray is reported to have called the views of John Knox. Well, of course it is a vision! Naturally, it lacks the articulation and schematic neatness of the school as extension of the home! And furthermore, it indeed requires very little discernment and erudition to point out what perplexing, seemingly insurmountable, problems must be faced in seeking to apply such thoughts to the concrete situation, the social-political and cultural realities of the day. This is all true. It is also true that, from the human point of view, it is an absurdity to expect anything great and decisive from the prophetic witness of the Church: to expect, for instance, that such proclamation could stop, or even curb, the onrushing floods of modern secularism. But do our chances of "success," from the human point of view, stand any better in other missionary and prophetic enterprises of the Church? What *would* the Church undertake if she were not moved by the dynamic vision of the kingdom of God? We are not idealists, but we must be prophets; we are summoned to faith, which is something quite different from facile optimism.

It must have become apparent by this time, that when I speak in defense of public education, I do not speak for a realm that has first been surrendered to the devil by declaring it neutral territory. I agree with those who assert that an absolutely neutral education is a fiction. That, incidentally, is equally true of a neutral State. I also agree with those who, on the other hand, propound that the school is not an agency of evangelism. Basically, it is a cultural construct. But recent history can teach us, if anything, that a cultural vacuum never remains that for any extended period of time. There are underlying forces of a spiritual nature which, in a determinative way, have contributed to our cultural heritage and the fabric of our society. They will not survive without them. And consequently, when we would plead, for instance, for a place of the Bible and Christian witness in the public school, this is done not primarily for the sake of the Church, but for the sake of the nation and its culture. Secularism is a dead-end road; the inevitable end is the death of all culture in the suffocating atmosphere of nihilism.

The very limited compass to which this discussion must be confined allows me to add only the following short remarks to the above observations. It is simply appalling to notice how many among us actually dodge these issues by seeking refuge in the (sacred?) tradition, or behind the allegedly insuperable wall between Church and State. We would certainly not advocate revolt against the Constitution or any Supreme Court pronouncements interpreting the Constitution. But since when does that mean that such pronouncements, or any tradition, are determinative for the confession and the prophetic witness of the Church? It is one thing to face realistically the historical conditions and limitations under which we live and witness. It is quite another thing to elevate the *status quo* to a position above the revelation, of course not in theory, but in practice. The question of the relationship between Christianity and its surrounding environment has always been of a problematical nature. And what else do we expect? It shares that with all existence "between the times." The question is, whether we believe, as a matter of *confession*, that it runs counter to the fundamental intentions of Scripture to seek for a structured relationship between them. In the context of our discussion this means, whether the Church is justified in divorcing the realm of the school from that of the Christian witness of the Church.

Let us face it, even under what may be considered the most favorable circumstances, we have not in the past, and we will not in the future, "solve" these questions. The standpoint of the absolute separation on the one hand, and of the absolute antithesis on the other hand seem, precisely as "solutions," unsatisfactory to me; they lack the prophetic perspective. Before I delineate this point further, one more rather parenthetical question: what does all that talk about the infringements upon the

rights of the agnostics really mean? Even Christian divines have in recent days expressed extreme concern about this matter. The impression is created that every prophetic utterance of the Church would involve a threat to the rights of the agnostics. This is all quite silly. In my own experience I have known some extremely dogmatic Christian teachers, but also some equally dogmatic "believers" (with creed and all!) in the camp of the agnostics. Let us please be realistic about this! The issue today might rather be whether a small but vocal minority shall have the exclusive rights to express their beliefs in the schools of the land. Religious liberty does include the right to disbelieve, but, as far as I am aware, nobody is disputing that.

We have thus pointed to a conflict of beliefs, a diversity of views concerning reality. And immediately the issue of the antithesis looms large before us. It is an integral part of the outlook of most Christian school proponents, at least in our circles. We could not even begin to discuss this concept, as it was developed by the Dutch scholar Abraham Kuyper and applied to a Christian social-political movement in the Netherlands. Suffice it to say that the antithesis is not just seen as the antithesis of basic principles, but much more radically as an absolute antithesis of people. There are two kinds of people, essentially different from each other.

For brevity's sake I would like to refer to a symposium, which was published some time ago in America under the title *God-centered Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1951), and which in the main is representative of the antithesis view. I would call special attention to the essay on Christian higher education by Dr. Wm. H. Jellema. His essay contains some very profound analyses of the basic conflict between a Christian theocentric view of reality and a non-Christian anthropocentric approach. On the hand of the Augustinian terminology the antithetical confrontation of the "City of God" with the "City of this world" is described. "Modern mind" is exposed as basically a form of pride which takes no account of the reality of the existence and revelation of God.

Few would quarrel with the basic analysis. What I find lacking here, and in similar expositions on the cultural dilemma of our time, is a dynamic outlook. It is all too static, more philosophical than prophetic. In this particular essay I find the Augustinian terminology without the Augustinian view of history as ultimately the work of God. What, I would like to ask, is the magical power of "contemporary mind," or what the basis of its hopeless condition, when compared, for instance, with the Greek and Roman mind in the early years of the witness of the Church, or the barbarian mind in the subsequent centuries? Is not "contemporary mind," in final analysis, one of the "powers" that have been

subjected to Christ, even if they do not know it? Such a confession does not exclude a task on our part. But I am not so sure at all that a Christian University, for instance, founded for the purpose of "articulating the City of God," will be more effective in combatting "contemporary mind" than a daily reading from Scripture in the schools of the land.

We will pass by the question of the role the Bible has played historically in American education; competent men have written on the developments in the various states. I would venture to say, and this is the important thing, that in many instances there are still opportunities for a Christian influence, in a more or less direct way, in the schools. And I indeed wonder, whether it is not precisely in places where such opportunities are still the greatest, that one will find most Christian schools sponsored by those of the Reformed persuasion. These rival schools are established in the name of the "eternal principle" of the antithesis! "Christian" in these contexts must generally be taken in the very narrow sense of a certain brand of "Calvinism," "Lutheranism" etc. If this procedure were universalized, I indeed would fear the consequences for both the Church and the nation. Under those circumstances I have felt that as a Christian parent, I *ought* to have no part in it.

It is rather easy to minimize the Christian influences that have historically helped to shape American education, and to magnify the value of such slogans as "a reborn teacher in front of every class." In the latter context one can work more easily with statistics showing "results," especially when thus regeneration is made a part of an ambitious program of action. Let us make things more Christian, albeit for fewer people! Most of the movements for a "pure" Christianity in the past, however, instead of precipitating the kingdom of God, have had an adverse effect, both on the Church and the nation. Before we fall for the above type of slogans, I hope we will in our continuing deliberations take a long and critical look at the biblical doctrine of regeneration. The manner in which this doctrine is sometimes treated almost amounts to a humanization of the divine mystery of conversion. Some strange things are advocated by those who onesidedly interpret the Bible in terms of inner experience. As far as our present topic is concerned, I have the impression that fortunately the practice of Christian teachers is often better than the theory of Christian preachers.

I do not urge a passive attitude of quietism, nor do I deny the reality of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men, but I would warn against a narrowing down of the biblical perspective which is in danger of turning the sovereignty of God into a tool which we can wield. When, in the above mentioned symposium, I find the first essay concluded with an appeal to strive "to make practical application of the sovereignty of

God to Christian living in every realm. . . .," I begin to wonder what has happened to God himself. Let us gratefully and humbly acknowledge his sovereignty, confess it, and proclaim it to all men, and let us believe that the Holy Spirit will apply it to the life of the people, both in the souls of individuals and in the social-political and cultural life of the nation.

But now the final question: does the rejection of the antithesis view, with its requirement of rival schools at all times under all circumstances, imply that we *ought* to reject Christian schools in any form and under any circumstances? In short, is it a question of either—or? I do not believe so. I am not concerned now with the relative distinctions between lower and higher education, though the question is important enough, as is the question of what really makes a Christian college Christian. But even if we limit our enquiry to the realm of grade school education, I do not believe that the Church can make an unqualified choice for the public school as such. I can conceive of circumstances and conditions, and possibly they prevail already in certain places in our land, that it can become imperative (again because of the prophetic task of the Church!), that separate schools be founded. This would, in contradistinction from the antithesis position, be considered an emergency measure. The Church has taken recourse to such emergency measures before in her history. They are indeed fraught with danger, in that the security of the isolation can make us blind for our prophetic task in the world. Where it is felt that obedience to the will of God requires such action, I can only hope that it will be done in an ecumenical context. The slogan "in isolation lies our strength" *can* lead to the acquisition of a kind of strength which is diametrically opposed to the "power" offered us by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have sought to outline a perspective from which this question can be viewed in its various ramifications. Some of the problems are baffling indeed. I have tried to present it as a *theological* perspective. Much would be gained already if the discussion would at least lead to an agreement among us that we can settle for no less than a theological position. Arguments of a sociological or psychological nature alone will not suffice, nor, for that matter, will well meaning but rather elusive patriotic phrases. These factors play a role, but where there is knowledge of the dimension of revelation as the presence of the living God in history, there it may be expected that these factors shall not occupy a central position. I have also attempted to present a theological perspective that takes account of history as much as of the soul. This, I believe, is scriptural.

Detail questions were avoided, and such phrases as "a place of the Bible in the public school" are admittedly vague. Mere outward and

formal practices will not save our civilization (although who shall say when the reading of Scripture is merely formal?). Such practices are important in so far as they are indicative of the fact that the *prevailing* culture which is transmitted through the schools is not of a wholly secular nature. The problems in a so-called pluralistic society are indeed immense. In hope we must believe against hope (Rom. 4:18). Such faith is prophetic.

If the public school can still be called a "bulwark of our heritage of freedom," then that is not so simply by virtue of the fact that it is *public*, as must have become abundantly clear from the most public of schools in the totalitarian states. We must look to the overall cultural pattern, which during the past centuries has helped to shape our educational system, and has been expressed through it, and which in turn itself was moulded by the Christian witness. One may feel inclined to dismiss this Christian influence as a thin varnish, but then one should study some recent cultural history to see what happens when the varnish is removed. Issues of such magnitude come into view when one begins to reflect on the question of education. As Christian parents, and above all as the Christian Church, we *ought* to think about these things when we think about a school for our children.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL VERSUS THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

HENRY J. TEN CLAY

The problem of Christian School versus the Public School is so perplexing because it is a problem of utmost practicality. It is not something with which Christians wrestle simply to have some controversial subject to discuss, but because it drives them to decisions of great moment. Therefore it is of exceeding importance that we approach it not only in great seriousness, but also with prayer and consecration. It is of much importance that we come to this problem, not only with open minds, but with loving and sympathetic understandings. We are all aware of the fact that there is not only much discussion, but much heated and unchristian discussion and argument. Let us remind each other that that type of thing does not further the cause, for "the wrath of men worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:20). Let us seek to be objective, and recognize that each of us has a right to his conviction, and a right to hold it without being 'brow-beaten' into a corner. Let us refrain from calling each other either 'pietistic' on the one hand, or 'unconcerned' on the other. Let us recognize that the Christian School man chooses his position from the conviction that this is his God-required duty. Let us also recognize that the Public School man can have chosen his position from God-inspired conviction also, and not merely from indifference to his children's spiritual life or from his own spiritual lethargy.

May I make reference to the introductory paragraph under which this paper appears? My line of thought is written in favor of education for the Christian in the public school. The 'ought' or the 'must' of the introduction is understood by me to signify a compulsion of reason and logic, not at all any type of external or organizational compulsion. The tenor of this paper is that by principle Christian children should be educated in the public school. I want immediately to add that sometimes it may be expedient that they be educated in a private or parochial school. That expediency may arise in a situation where such godlessness prevails, and where it is so hopeless of letting any Christian influence be felt that the parent has no alternative. Christian discernment must be exercised under the direction of the Holy Spirit to know when and where such conditions prevail. With those introductory remarks may I present the theme of this paper. The complete education of Christian children must carry out those principles by which they shall be best prepared to meet life, and make their greatest contribution to it. My thinking shall explore three areas: the principles, the practice, and the prospect of education for the Christian.

I. THE PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN

To my understanding, education operates first of all under the principle of intellectual development. There are definitely certain facts, data, and skills that must be learned and mastered. Certain fundamental rules of mathematics and grammar, also certain information of geography, history, etc. must be taught the pupils. The mind of the pupil must be developed in such a way that he learns to think, and that his thought processes are trained to become keen and cultivated. The memory must be cultivated in such a way that a great reservoir of knowledge is retained for further use. In addition to that, the pupils must learn the use of books and other equipment. Never can the human mind assimilate all that there is to know. An educated man is not necessarily one who knows so much, but one who knows where to find his information and then how to use it. Education must certainly train the student in the use of information which he has gathered, and which he knows is obtainable if he needs it. Regardless of what type of school is used, these foregoing requirements are fundamental. These are beyond dispute.

Education must also do something for the child's personality; it must do something for him psychologically. "As a living and growing person, every individual is an integer, a complete and living entity. He can stand up in the midst of the world of grown-ups and count for one. But as an integer, a person has integral relations and responsibilities, which link his life with the lives of others."¹ For that type of life he must be trained, and his training is very important. He must first of all learn to live with his own people, but even more important, he must learn to live with other people. Early in life the youngster must come to see that the people of the world are not homogeneous, but heterogeneous. People are different from one another as to background, as to race, as to training, religion and nationality. Never does the child come to understand that too soon. In the public school he does not need to be taught that; he sees it before his eyes continually, and it becomes part of his unconscious realization. By contrast, in the Christian school, which is a homogeneous institution, this knowledge must come to him as something taught, rather than as an unconscious realization. When it is taught, the child is apt to feel it is a problem with which to cope, rather than a fundamental law of sociology. In the public school the child will not need to be taught the great virtue of tolerance. He will learn to cope with persons and influences of different background and ideology, not as a problem, but as one of life's common issues. "We believe in toleration in the sense not of a patronizing condescension, but rather of a profound respect of differing

1. A. DeBlois and D. Gorham, *Christian Religious Education* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1939) p. 119.

opinions and beliefs. How best can a numerous people, spread over thousands of miles of mountains and prairies, and representing almost every race, nationality and religious belief under heaven, insure such toleration? Only by seeing to it that our children and youth in their formative years rub shoulders one with another. America is often spoken of as the melting pot, and so it is. But there is one institution within American life to which the term is peculiarly suited — namely the public schools. If it were not for the amalgamation accomplished there, the motto on our coins and on our national existence as well, E PLURIBUS UNUM, 'out of many one', would probably become as dead as the Latin in which it is written."²

Let us also recognize that in addition to education as an intellectual process, and a process of psychological development, it has spiritual qualities. The point I wish to make is that education in a public school fits into a spiritual development. While it is done in a different way, yet it is as definite as in a professedly Christian school. "Some attempt to identify the term 'secular' with godlessness and atheism. Accordingly, when the United States Supreme Court ruled that sectarian instruction cannot be carried on in the public schools nor the machinery of a tax-supported public school system be used to promote parochial interests in religion, it was charged with 'banishing God from the schools.'"³ We must realize that inasmuch as religion is a spiritual thing, a matter of the heart, primarily, it can be as real for the individual child in the public school as in the Christian school. The child is not in a spiritual vacuum when he is in school, even though the Bible may not be taught outright. If Christ has come to dwell in the heart of that child by faith, then Christ is with him also in the public school. People sending their children to the public school are often charged with departmentalizing life for their children, namely making religion to be separate from common life. I feel that they who charge us with that are the very ones who are guilty of doing it. The Christian must learn that God is in all of life. A certain Christian school advocate, T. van der Kooy, says that "submission to the absolute characterizes the Christian school in a special degree."⁴ It seems to me that education in a public school is the experience of the submission to the absolute much more. In it the Christian recognizes that God is in the 'all' of life, and the life in the common order is the life in which the Christian faith must and will grow. The Christian faith and life is that

2. F. Ernest Johnson, *American Education and Religion* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952) p. 86.
3. V. T. Thayer, *The Attack upon the American Secular School* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951) p. 9.
4. T. van der Kooy, *The Distinctive Features of the Christian School* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1925) p. 25.

which grows from within, by the grace of God, and presents itself outwardly. This same author says, "He who is instructed in the Scripture rises to a height from which he surveys the great totality of things; his horizon extends itself to the ends of the earth; he knows his position as a human being, because he views himself and all things primarily in his relation to God, of Whom and through Whom and to Whom all things are" (van der Kooy, p. 26). That description does not fit the product of the Christian school as well as it does the children from Christian parents who are taught and understand God's Word and have received the benefit of parental intercessory prayer, and then have the broadening aspect of the public school education. They can "survey the great totality of things much better." Then this author adds, "That which makes the Christian school distinctive is, in general, its being rooted in the life view that takes its departure from the absolute sovereignty of God" (van der Kooy, p. 27). Again I say, that description fits the viewpoint not of the Christian school, but the Calvinistic Christian who grounds his child in all holy truth in church and home, and then enters the wide world in common education. May I claim another argument of this eminent scholar? "To educate the children for their calling means to educate them for society, state and church; it means also to educate them with reference to eternity. This broad program, again, is something characteristic of the Christian school; for the public school confines itself particularly to educating for society and state, ecclesiastical and religious life being sadly neglected" (van der Kooy, p. 31). Does the author imply that there is education only in the hours at school? Is not all of life for the child an education? Does not the godly home fit into the total picture of education? Is not that which is taught in the home by way of Bible instruction also part of the totality of the education of a child? The "broad program of education" certainly cannot be claimed by the Christian school. The child must be led to see and realize that Christianity is a spiritual experience, covering all of life. The life in Christ is not of the world, though it be in the world; it is not outside of nor isolated from the world, but expressed in the world. "In like manner, the distinctive feature of Christian education is that the child is not reared in the atmosphere of a choice that is still to be made, he is already included in the ranks of King Jesus, whose insignia he bears" (van der Kooy, p. 70). That statement is most certainly true of a Christian-home child in a public school. He has day-by-day choices of right and wrong, but the decision of his life is already made of him as well, or more so, than of the Christian-School child. The world, non-Christian forces and persons, are but the natural surroundings in this world in which the Christian life is compelled to be lived. Remember, our Savior said that we are not of the world, even though we may be in the world. The life of a Christian child in a public school is not lived in a spiritual vacuum. Christ is in his heart, the Holy Spirit is his guide,

and he learns to live and express his Christian faith and life in the natural world order, from which not one of us can escape.

II. THE PRACTICE OF EDUCATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN

It is well not only to think upon this great problem theoretically, but we are also to examine the practice of consecrated Christian people who send their children for their formal education to the public day school. What about their religious teaching? The stock answer, and probably the only conclusive answer, is that that is the domain of the home and of the church. Never can we emphasize too strongly the paramount importance of thorough Christian home training. No school can displace nor replace fundamental Christian training in the home. The readers of this paper are probably all covenanted people. We have had our children baptized, and our weighty vows have been spoken. How we urge ourselves to be like Lois and Eunice (II Tim. 1:2) in whom dwelt the unfeigned faith, and also in young Timothy! Sadly derelict is that parent who is willing to push his parental and covenantal responsibility upon another person or institution. Before God he stands responsible for the training of that child. Often we hear it said that "the school is an auxiliary to the home in the education of the children" (van der Kooy, p. 30). If by that is meant that the school must teach that for which the home is unprepared, we agree. If by that is meant that the school must help the home do its special work, we heartily disagree. While every Christian parent will rejoice whenever his child learns some Scripture verse or truth, regardless of where he learns it, yet he in no wise must think that the day school has a responsibility to teach his child that Scripture verse or truth. In this organized society of ours the Church is looked to by our Christian people as the place in which spiritual and Scriptural truth is taught and inculcated together with the home. "There are only two institutions which can accept this mandate (religious education), the church and the home. . . . Nothing quite comparable is to be found at the moment within Protestant church-centered education. We have far to go, but we are on the way" (Johnson, p. 91). No doubt many parents can take far more seriously the spiritual training of their children in the church of their choice. Everyone knows the struggle involved to get children to prepare their catechism and Sunday-school lessons thoroughly. That difficulty, however, is no excuse for its not being done. In addition, let us never forget that the child must be pressed for consecration to the Lord Jesus early in life. By that I do not refer to an early profession of faith; I refer to a love for and consecration of life to the Lord Jesus in the measure and depth to which the age of the child permits. A child of six can certainly be urged to love and live for the Savior as well as one of sixteen. I fear that too many parents give

that concern too little consideration. The child that is taught, often and early, that he belongs to the Savior, and is to live for the Savior, will live and express that type of life in a public as well as in a Christian school.

In connection with that early inculcation there must also be the recognition of the faith of other persons. In order to steer clear of the "better-than-thou-ism" the child in the public school soon learns that there are other persons who are just as sincere in their faith and have a right to their viewpoint. In such an atmosphere his faith will not mean less, but rather much more, to him. He will automatically take for granted that what his home life and teaching means to him is similar to what home life and teaching mean to another. He will come to a deep appreciation of the "unity of the body of Christ." Fundamentally he will come to see himself as one with other believing children, and recognize that in Christ they are brothers. It will appear proper to them that their school mates may be of a different church-family, even as they are from a different home-family. In marked contrast to that experience they will see that there are other girls and boys who do not care about church and spiritual things at all. Automatically they will see that they themselves are "on the Lord's side" and that they must face the foe. Not in external battle will they be engaged, but early in life they will know that they "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers" (Eph. 6:12). They are not left with the choice of to whom they belong, but of how they are going to meet that challenge. The public school therein itself has a responsibility. (I do not say that everything the public school now says and does is best and right. I recognize important things that must be changed. This generation is the generation to change them.) I agree with Dr. R. H. Martin, who says, "But does it follow that the public school must maintain a strict and lofty neutrality as to God? . . . Such a neutrality is not maintained by either state or national government. . . . They may be neutral as to the strife of sects, but they cannot be neutral as to God."⁵ Christian children thus together will know that there is a great difference between believers and non-believers. They will know that "they have not so learned Christ" (Eph. 4:20). Is it fantastic to believe that children, inculcated in the Christian faith, of which the Savior says, "no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:29), will be stabilized and spiritually sensitized as they stand for and in the Christian faith?

May I also draw to our attention that such children, under impact of our Savior's statement, "Ye are my witnesses," will have a consciousness of the spiritual need of their fellow-scholars. Because the Christian faith

5. Renwick Harper Martin, *Our Public Schools — Christian or Secular* (Pittsburgh: National Reform Ass'n., 1952) p. 26.

is a propagandizing faith, the children will want to share it. Parents who encourage their children to live as "the leaven in the lump" and to "shine as lights in the world" will find that their children seek to tell the Christian faith quite readily. In all walks of life missionaries are needed. They are needed not only as adults to tell adults the story of Jesus, but as children to tell children. Our Savior included the children when he said that we are not to hide our lights under a bushel. Children are often very effective witnesses of Jesus. But someone will quickly say that we must not think only of that which our children may, as missionaries, tell others, but what others will tell them, and what influence our children may suffer. Let us not forget that here too the best defense is a good offence. The child that is taught persistently in the great truths of God's Word will also soon detect false philosophies. They are not slow to understand the difference between naturalistic and materialistic philosophies over against the theistic philosophies in which they are grounded. What catechism teacher has not had young people call attention to certain theories of which they have heard that to them contradict certain Biblical conceptions? Without seeming to be naive, I want to suggest that children who have early and late been taught God's Word will be held fast in the faith, while they themselves may also present a real testimony. With that type of influence present it will be readily recognized that schools and teachers will also be the more careful as to what they draw forth as teachings of naturalistic and materialistic concepts. May I reiterate, however, that Christian parents with spiritual discernment will always be on guard and be very concerned about the prevailing trends in the local school which their children attend? There may be times and places in which, after making a determined stand and witness, the expedient thing is to seek some other means of school education.

III. THE PROSPECT OF EDUCATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN

Let us always remind ourselves of the purpose of education in its totality. "The public school (or other also) should serve three interests: first, the interest of the parents who ought to be allowed to have the kind of school they want; second, the needs of the community which the school is to serve; and last, the needs of the state" (Johnson, p. 72). Plainly, an education should ingraft into the child's mind a consciousness and awareness of, and concern for, the entire human race. "It has been said that the ultimate objective of education is the self-realization of the individual."⁶ Certainly such a goal requires a great concern for all men.

6. "Education" from *New Standard Encyclopedia* (Chicago: Standard Education Society, 1949) Vol. 3.

Thus "the American State school, free and open to all, was finally evolved and took its place as the most important influence in the national life, working for the perpetuation of American democracy and the advancement of the public welfare."⁷ Our founding fathers "made education a public responsibility to insure that all American youth will be qualified for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. This was the origin, and this is the primary purpose of our great American free public school system" (Martin, p. 18). James Madison said, "People who mean to be their own governors must be educated." Abraham Lincoln said, "Public education is the most important thing we the people are engaged in." "If we depended in any major degree upon institutions (private) to meet our farflung education needs, the result would be pure chaos. If we placed our chief reliance upon church institutions (parochial) to educate the rising generation within a population of a hundred and fifty million people, the most likely result would be an almost equal degree of chaos. The only procedure likely to accomplish these ends is a system of free schools, open to all, financed by all, conducted by officials in the name of all, and permeated by a high regard for the good of all" (Johnson, p. 86). "Important as the public school is in any democracy, it is doubly so in ours. It has the peculiar task of Americanizing the children of many foreigners. We are a people of wide diverse origins, races, and cultures. . . . The public school is our chief agency in assimilating these diverse peoples, and molding them into our American way of life. The remarkable degree of unity which prevails in our American life and culture is largely due to our system of public education. The public school is our chief agency in transmitting from generation to generation our common American heritage, . . . liberty, freedom, republican way of government" (Martin, p. 22). Therefore it is incumbent upon us not only to use that great system, but correct in it that which needs to be corrected.

By all means, let us not forsake the institution of public schools. "To neglect our school system is a crime against the future. Such neglect could well be more disastrous to all our freedoms than the most formidable armed assault on our physical defense." D. D. Eisenhower (Martin, p. 130). What we Christians need is a great sense of mission and responsibility over against our public school system. If we feel the Supreme Court decision in the McCullum case is not right, then let us get action to right it. Why be defeatists? "If the judiciary suffers today by a prevalence of secularists, then it is time to tighten the education curriculum and produce idealists who will permit the rights of God to triumph" (Johnson, p. 71). In the fight to improve the public school, let us

7. "Education, United States" from *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1947) vol. 7, p. 992.

realize our democratic possibilities and our Christian heritage. "Restoring the Bible and non-sectarian religion to the places of primary importance they formerly had in our public schools, is the true solution. They will provide American youth with an education that will develop them morally and spiritually as well as intellectually" (Martin, p. 33). All is not lost, but let us guard carefully. "The teachings of the Bible are so interwoven with our whole civic and social life that it would be literally impossible for us to figure what life would be if those teachings were removed" T. Roosevelt (Martin, p. 120). "Might I suggest that there are already some old and tested codes of ethics? There are the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the rules of the game which we learned at our mother's knees. Can a nation live if these are not the guides of public life?" Herbert Hoover (Martin, p. 34).

If this is our country, these blessed United States, then these schools are our schools, and it is our right and prerogative, yes, our duty and challenge, to maintain and improve these public schools. Not only for our nation and its children, and as a public service provision, but for ourselves and our children to use, we are to maintain and improve them! Let us never relinquish a guardedness against further encroachment of that which tears this institution down. "If this secularization is permitted to continue, it will mean the downfall of our nation. . . . The Church still has sufficient power to overcome this secularizing influence once she is aware of it and undergirds herself to meet it" (Martin, p. 45). We need to advance in reclaiming our public schools. "The charge made against them that they are 'godless' and 'pagan' is an exaggeration. The pervasive influence of the Bible and religion is still there to a certain degree. The ideals and standards of Christianity are to some extent still operative in our schools. Many of our teachers are of the Christian faith and exhibit in their character and conduct the influence of the Christian faith. This is all to the good, but it is far from being sufficient" (Martin, p. 55). The climb is long and hard, but, under God, not impossible. "The secular school is neither anti-religious as some charge, . . . nor is it dedicated to the promotion of any one religious viewpoint or final philosophy of life" (Thayer, p. 219). There is still opportunity, and if Christians would unite in a campaign to reclaim the school, much could be done. Study, for instance, the program being carried on in Indianapolis, Indiana! Schools there are teaching the place of religious events and influences as natural history, fitting into the other dates and events. Eighth-graders are noting that the name 'God' appears four times in the Declaration of Independence, and that Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish services are held regularly in the Pentagon. Dr. H. L. Shibler, the superintendent, says, "We aren't teaching religion; we're teaching about religion." "We tell the children George Washington's attitude toward religion — how he

prayed and what he said in his prayers."⁸ It also applies to the present. President Eisenhower must be a very religious man. They are shown the quotation from Gen. Omar Bradley, "This country has many men of science, too few men of God. It has grasped the mystery of the atom, but has rejected the Sermon on the Mount" (*ibid*). Where we live is the place to begin an aggressive effort. In some places the task may seem impossible. In other places there is much that can be done. Certainly we dare not give in nor give up without a great struggle.

In seeking to promote these needed efforts, let us realize always that the work of our Lord is a spiritual work. All of life is precious to him. We are told, "we cannot be satisfied with public instruction that relegates all religious education to catechism and Sunday-school. Such relegation violates absolutely the natural organic relationship; religion must not be added to education, but form an integral part of it" (van der Kooy, p. 41). I certainly agree with that position, but contend that in taking Christians out of the public school, they are taking the heaven out of the lump, and are relegating much of life to godlessness and evil. Surely children of Christian schools will not retain their 'wholeness', but suffer a great schism between their educated life, and life as they must live it in the world. Thus upon us lies the task of bringing Christ and Christian principles and influence, more and more into the public school. In such an effort we shall both bless ourselves and be a blessing to the world in which we live. Suppose that all children of Catholic and Protestant families were taken out of the public schools, there would be left only those without church connection. There would be no call nor restraining influence of any type of religion. Then what hope would there be of curbing crime, of presenting the claims of Christ, or even the effects of God-consciousness? Have the proponents of parochial schools considered this? What plan have they for meeting it? We are the salt of the earth. Even now, if all Protestant families who are not sending their children to the public school would do so, and put their full influence into P.T.A. as well as offering themselves to be elected as members of the school boards, offering themselves to be teachers, and encouraging all godly teachers and superintendents, what a tremendous power this would be! Instead of scoffing at the weakness of the public school, there would then be tremendous help and power for those seeking to promote its best, and the best of our nation. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

8. "Indianapolis Teaches Pupils Role of Religion in History" (Grand Rapids: *Grand Rapids Press*, Feb. 22, 1956).

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

JAMES W. BAAR

When I speak for Christian schools, this does not imply that I am against the public schools. This is not a question of being "against," but rather "for" something.

God in his providence planned that my birth and rearing should be in the Reformed Church of America (RCA). In our family there are teachers who have taught in the Christian and the public school at all levels, primary, secondary, and college. Now, with little children in my home, the question arises, where will they receive their education?

It is a fact to say that the RCA has always been interested in Christian schools, with the emphasis on college education. Only a small minority of our people have promoted and used the lower grades. I believe in a Christian school for both primary and secondary education.

In order to remove prejudices, it should be clear at the outset, that this is not a defense of all existing Christian schools, or of the program of any one denomination. Many who have promoted Christian schools are constantly fighting sectarianism and ecclesiastical pride, and admit there is much room for improvement. When we speak for the Christian school, we have in mind a school for evangelical Christians.

We do not want Christian schools for the purpose of perpetuating an elite class of people or to promote a national tradition or a past culture. We do not have schools because the home has failed, or because we wish to keep our churches strong. We are not first of all interested in promoting a sectarian kind of Christianity or trying to create an evangelistic center where our children are more apt to get saved.

We do not build the school because the public schools are necessarily evil and corrupt. In some places the Christian school has been promoted through hostility toward the public school. It is possible for a public school to develop in a wrong direction, but if in its very nature it were an evil, all our efforts ought to be directed toward the annihilation of this evil. Rather, we believe, it is our Christian duty to help the public school.

We do not advocate Christian schools because it is a "must" in the sense that God can only establish his kingdom when there is a Christian school. Some believe the entire Christian school system is required to comply with baptismal vows of parents. For some it seems only when there is a specialized curriculum, can God's grace operate effectually. We know God can save us and our children without a Christian school. We

believe we are saved by faith, and faith alone, without a school. God does not need a Christian school to mediate grace to us, neither does he need a visible church. An accumulation of Bible knowledge gained through the school does not assure the faith that saves. The Christian school is not essential to our salvation, even as baptism is not essential. Rather, our churches and schools are the result of our life in Christ who has saved us by grace through faith. Moreover, being saved, we are led to honor God in all spheres of life. No man, nor Church, therefore, can bind the conscience at this point.

But all these points deal only with the periphery of the subject. Let us look to the real reasons for our Christian schools. God has made a most wonderful promise or covenant with us. He said he would be our God to save us. He also said that he would be a saving God to our children. There can be no more wonderful promise. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generation for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee" (Gen. 17:7). These covenantal promises for our children also involve covenantal responsibilities. God asks us to be a teacher to our children.

The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates (Deut. 6:4b-9).

Parents are to teach their children everywhere, indoors, outdoors, at all times, the first thing in the morning, and the last thing at night. All the environment is to be saturated with the Word of God. Mary and Joseph obeyed this command in the training of Jesus. Under their parental care Jesus grew in wisdom, i.e., intellectual growth; in stature, i.e., physical growth; in favor with God, i.e., spiritual growth; and in favor with man, i.e., social growth. Every area of life is to be controlled by the parent-teacher. Paul adds, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

The Bible teaches us a consistent theory of education: our children, without any merit in parent or child, have a God-ordained, favored position in the world; God commands parents to be the teachers; God directs that all the teaching shall be saturated with his Word. If man will regard these principles, God will guarantee the results. These obligations for parents are not being met, and cannot be met in the public schools. Then

it follows for many of us in this day, that a private Christian school aiming particularly at these goals, is the only alternative when we take the Word of God seriously.

God has delegated his authority to parents to teach, and parents in turn delegate this authority to a trained teacher. Every parent must be sure the teacher in the classroom is a worthy substitute for his parental responsibilities. In American public education the teacher's first obligation is to the state or nation. The school should be an extension of the home, and not of the state.

The teacher should not only represent the parent, but he also must bring the education the parent desires. We believe all the education our children receive should be within the framework of the Word of God. Parents can expect this kind of integration in a private, parent controlled, Christian school.

Along with these facts the parents know the mind of the child is distorted by sin, and the understanding is darkened. This condition is a matter of great concern during the few hours the child spends in church life, and surely it is a matter of great concern in the home. But this condition must also be considered during the many hours in the school. Sin has marred a child's relationship to God, to other men, and to the world. Education is true education only when it is aimed at the development of the essential nature of man. Since we are essentially and basically religious beings, the complete education must be religious. We are to train a child in the way he **SHOULD** go, not the way he **WANTS** to go. Education should be God-centered and God-directed, and not child-directed. A child not only receives knowledge, but also learns how to use knowledge, and that means to use it for God as well as for his fellow man.

To receive a schooling where these facts have to be ignored means education must be divided into two areas, one secular and one sacred. This dualism is the despair of educators and parents alike. Listen to Emil Brunner! "It is difficult to imagine a system of teaching mathematics which could be described as 'Naturalistic', or 'Idealistic', or 'Christian'; within the sphere of history, however, these epithets cease to be meaningless, . . . the question of education merges into the question of faith" (p.506).¹ "Idealistic teaching is not realistic, for it does not consider the basic nature of man. The 'neutral school' is a fiction of the imagination" (p.515). George Buttrick adds, "If God is the sovereign fact of life, God is the sovereign fact for education, and if Christ is God's self-reve-

1. Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative* (London; The Lutterworth Press, 1937) p.506.

lation for life, Christ is precisely that for education."² We believe our education must be integrated with our Christian Faith. That this is impossible in a state school has been made clear by the recent Supreme Court decision barring cooperation between church and school at Champaign, Illinois.

Because God's children in our homes are living in the most impressionable age, because "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1), including education, because we are created in the image of God and are to have an undivided spiritual personality for him, and because we are to do ALL things to the glory of God, we establish a private, parent controlled, Christian school. My American countrymen are happy to grant me this privilege. My church also permits me to follow God's direction for my conscience.

In taking this position I have been asked many questions by my friends. They too, as American Christians in the Reformed family acknowledge God's covenant with us and our children. They know they are called by God to teach their children. They believe, however, they can meet these obligations without a Christian school. They would make their full witness and confidence in the public school. Even though many of their questions do not come to grips with the real issues involved, they should be answered. The first set of questions are directed at the Christian school itself.

Some reject the Christian school on the grounds that it develops pride. The children of a separate school begin to think they are better than others. Some misinformed parents may lead their children into this sin. The school, however, is established by parents who confess that they and their children are sinners. If the school is Christian, pride will find little room. Pride may also be present in a public school where some believe religion is not essential in the school. It seems to rise when a person glories in having passed through the public school without having his faith destroyed by secular influences. If this criticism is pertinent, then by the same argument, we ought not go to Church because those who attend may think themselves better than those who do not. Then we should not even have released time for religious education, because those who take the course may think they are better than those who do not.

Some believe the building of a Christian school is unpatriotic and undemocratic, in its division of community life. It's more patriotic to do what most Americans do in education, they think. To place all children in the great melting pot of a common school is a great benefit to our

2. George A. Buttrick, *Faith and Education* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952) p.17

country. But we believe patriotism thrives in our blessed land only when there is a dynamic Protestantism. This is part of the Reformed heritage. To give everyone the privilege of choosing his education, rather than to have one system, is to see democracy in action. The existence of a Christian school promotes democracy, rather than stifles it.

Some believe, to place a child in a Christian School leaves a child maladjusted. This is to place them in a "greenhouse" where they become "hot house plants," not ready to live in and face the world. But, children in the grades and high school are still tender plants. When they receive early special care they will be that much stronger later. To rear them in a secular world in immaturity, and then later to send them into the Christian college "greenhouse" is without logic to me. If some children are maladjusted through the Christian school, it is equally possible for a child to be maladjusted in a public school by becoming conformed to this world.

Some have rejected the Christian school because it cannot provide the wide opportunities in education; it cannot afford the latest facilities. The public schools in some areas have the same predicament. No one resigns from the human race because it is imperfect. Our schools should be Christian and they should be schools, teachers should be Christians but also teachers. Even during the up-hill climb, however, these schools have had a great record. With respect to our colleges, statistics show that the greatest number of leaders come from small Church-related colleges in spite of their underpaid faculty, overcrowded classrooms and inadequate buildings and campus. Moreover, Christian schools have progressed in buildings, opportunities and equipment.

Other questions are more positive in nature and argue for an alternative for the Christian school. Many sincerely believe their responsibilities can be satisfactorily discharged in a program of released time for religious instruction. Released time has some benefit, and we shouldn't disregard it, but it is not enough. Henry P. Van Dusen makes a plea for religion within education, not with it, or on the side of it. "No longer is religion the keystone of the educational arch, but rather one stone among many, and a stone for which no very logical or satisfactory place within the main structure can be discovered."³ George Buttrick adds, "Nor can the educator be content to let the school add God as an extracurricular according to choice . . . For if God is God, God cannot be merely an extra or an avocation . . . to side-step the central issue, and to try and conduct anything (such as education) as if the central issue did not exist, is evasion. The uneasiness that comes of letting major issues go by default has

3. Henry P. Van Dusen, *God in Education* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951) p.52.

fallen like mildew on our schools."⁴ If the salt of the Christian religion is to permeate, it is not placed beside the meat.

Whatever value these programs of released time have had, it is now a fact that most of them have been discontinued in the light of the Supreme Court decision. Many believe the Supreme Court has erred in its decision and predict a reversal. Only God knows if it will come. The White House conference offered no hope of its restoration.

Others hold that the public school administrators are trying to teach moral and spiritual values, and this fact makes the Christian school unnecessary. On the surface this seems fine, but for the Christian his moral and spiritual values are rooted in Jesus Christ. Public school officials who admit their difficulty with this issue confess that to speak of God is to teach God, and to teach God is to be sectarian, and to be sectarian is unconstitutional. And so, the whole program to teach these values as Christian values is always at the mercy of one unbeliever, whose constitutional rights must be regarded.

There are other objections voiced for which we should have a sincere, intelligent and satisfactory answer. Many confess the need of a Christian college without seeing the need for the grade school or the high school. The argument usually reads, that the student in college leaves his home environment and thus needs a Christian environment during this critical maturing stage. According to this reasoning, an RCA family living in a state university town, should enroll their son at the university rather than in the Christian college at some distant town. When we speak of the Christian environment on the Christian college campus, we mean more than atmosphere. What most of us really have in mind are the many devoted teachers, who are active, witnessing, evangelical Christians who are serving their God, and at the same time their special field of education. This is the very same thing that many parents desire for the lower grades where they believe the pupil is even more readily led than at the college age.

Incidentally, it seems the RCA loses some college students, because people are not readily converted to the value of a Christian college education after a long association in public schools, and after the state has paid for their primary and high school training. Then too, there are those looking at the Christian college, who believe that in our abbreviated educational program, we don't provide and produce for their satisfaction a faculty where all teachers have an enthusiasm for this "dual capacity." There are others who believe at the college level they want their children to "mingle with the secular world," and they have no sympathy whatsoever with the Christian college.

4. Buttrick, *op. cit.*, pp.17, 18.

Many sincerely fear that if the time comes when the public school is replaced by the private school, the greatest bulwark of our democracy will be destroyed. We are told the public school is the "American Way." Both of these statements can be challenged. A private Christian school for a majority in our country may bring about a great revival of lasting benefit for God and country. The "American Way" is not what we have today, but what we had yesterday. The RCA generally has not supported the private Christian school because for years men knew in public schools there was a positive bias toward the Christian faith. We believe Christian schools have helped rather than hindered the cause of public schools by providing wholesome competition, and curbing an educational drift to irreligion.

Some parents want their children to be in the public schools to be a leaven, a witness, to be "little missionaries." It is said, "Where would we be if all Christians would take their children out of the public schools?" This point is well meant, but we have to have answers to several questions to accept it. Are our children at this early age at the giving or receiving stage? Are they qualified to handle the job? Would the school permit it? We believe the moral and spiritual tone of a school depends largely upon the administration, rather than upon the witness of a few believing souls. Moreover, we do not believe our universities are more godless because we have maintained Christian colleges. I believe more Christian schools will help the public schools by helping education in general.

Some take the position that the Christian school is necessary only when the last vestige of religion has been excluded from the public school. Who can decide when this time has come? By that time it may be too late for my child who needs to be educated now.

There are intelligent minds in the RCA who have lived or studied in Europe and have watched the development of private religious schools in two continents. In some places in the past the Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian schools have created a situation where Rome in its unity has gained political ascendancy over a divided Protestantism. It is feared this pattern may follow in our country if the public school doesn't hold all anti-catholic groups together. This pattern does not have to follow here, for America is not Europe, and this is now the middle of the twentieth century, and besides we can learn from history. Furthermore, we don't owe the separation of church and state to the public school. Our constitution by its separation of church and state made the public school possible. To promote the public school alone could play into the hands of Rome. Our reasons for a Christian school, however, should be based first on our direction from God, rather than on our fear for Rome.

In facing our responsibilities and in trying to answer some of the questions that grow out of them, we naturally are confronted with great decisions for the future. Our people must decide before God, to hold to their course, or to change it. For some time in our Church, opinions have been molded through many who have come out of public education where it could be said the local situation was generally satisfactory. Those who base their thinking upon their own school experience of a generation ago, or upon a present experience in a small closely knit community where the schools defy the Supreme Court ban, are speaking about a kind of public school which cannot now legally exist. No one can be satisfied, however, because he believes his own situation is still favorable, for everyone has become our neighbor, and the problem is national. This problem is not only "sacred or secular," but also "black or white" (segregation). We are at a time when we need special leading from the Lord to solve the total problem.

Let us thank God we can pray for one another as we discuss every aspect! Let us thank God we can prayerfully consider God's direction for each other, without heated argument, old rivalries and animosities, but rather with calm, careful, and Christian reflection! Let us ask God to help us make our decisions as a result of the direction of the Holy Spirit, rather than be governed by ecclesiastical, family, or community pressure or denominational tradition! How wonderful that we can take time to plan for the future rather than to spend all of our time justifying our past!

It will not be easy for us to solve this question. It is difficult, no matter what degree of learning we may have, to overcome our biases based on early training and environment. Some in our Church may have fanned the flame of hostility, because they have joined our Church as a result of an unfortunate Christian school experience while members in some other denomination. Being very close to Christian school advocates whose vision may be somewhat parochial, it is possible for us to miss the greatness of the ideal purpose of the whole program. Moreover, too many among us make decisions for or against either school because of "on the spot" emotion among people, rather than because of deep, abiding, biblical convictions.

For the immediate future we must consider not an "either or" but a "both and" program. Effort must be made for the reversal of the Supreme Court decision. Some of our best trained active Christians should be carefully prepared in our colleges for public school service for God and country, as long as they can serve with a "mission," i.e., to make their teaching a great crusade for the Lord our God. But also, let us learn why there is today such a phenomenal growth for the Christian schools, and consider whether we are denying to our children spiritual benefits en-

joyed by others. Let us also remind ourselves that the Foreign and Domestic Mission Boards spend a sizable part of the budget for Christian schools, with some of these schools within the United States. Conditions may be different, but the principle is the same. Let us prepare schools and teachers for our children. Let us make a sincere attempt to solve the question of getting a majority of Christian teachers in public schools, and also some problems that will arise when and if a majority of Protestants are in the private Christian school. Let us also face the question of a Christian school in EVERY community.

Let us also listen to past and present leaders in the Church on the subject of public schools and secularism. If they are wrong we should silence them. If they are right we must give their testimony serious thought. Here is A. A. Hodge of Princeton fame, going back to 1887.

"I am sure as I am of the fact of Christ's reign that a comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is commonly now proposed, will prove the most appalling engine for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social, and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen. . . . It is capable of exact demonstration that if every party in the State has the rights of excluding from the public schools whatever he does not believe to be true, then he that believes most must give way to him that believes least, and then he that believes least must give way to him that believes absolutely nothing, no matter in how small a minority the atheist or agnostic may be. It is self evident that on this scheme, if it is consistently carried out, in all parts of the country, the United States' system of national popular education will be the most efficient and wise instrument for the propagation of atheism which the world has ever seen."⁵

Writing in the *Christian Century* in 1946, Charles Morrison has this to say:

"As far as I can see, there are only two ways out. One is for the public school to open its curriculum to the teaching of religion. The other is for Protestantism to establish its own schools, somewhat on the model of the Roman Catholic parochial schools, and to withdraw its children from the public schools. One or two Protestant denominations have already begun to move in that direction. For Protestantism as a whole to adopt this drastic alternative would mean the collapse of a great American ideal—the ideal of a liberal democracy providing its children with the kind of education which citizenship in a democracy requires. For Protestantism to take its stand beside Catholicism in withdrawing its children from the public schools and educating them in Protestant schools, would spell the end of the public school system as we know it. This would be a tremendous price to pay for the inertia of our educators and the blindness of our clergy. But it might be less costly than to allow the drift toward secularism to continue."⁶

5. A. A. Hodge, *Popular Lectures on Theological Themes* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1887) pp.281-284.
6. Charles C. Morrison, "Can Protestantism Win America?" *The Christian Century*, April 17, 1946, p.490.

Two important matters are to be remembered. First, we do not want Christian schools for the same reason the Roman Catholic Church does. We believe more Roman power stifles democracy, but a strong Protestantism will strengthen it. Second, the Christian school is not established to undermine the public school but to improve it through competition. European theologians remind us that one system of education easily plays into the hands of a political party.

The Christian parent should be sure he is directed of the Lord, from his Word, in establishing a Christian school. At the same time the parents with children in the public school must ask themselves if the Bible teaches that, first, children are to be educated by the state, and second, that education can be divorced from the Christian faith. The parents of the public school child should also consider whether he is qualified and has the time at his disposal daily to explain, re-explain, and at times counter-explain what the child has been taught in a school which dares not teach the place of God in the world in which we live. The burden of proof, it seems to me, is not resting on the advocates of the Christian school, but on the advocates of the public school.

It is impossible for me to agree with some that this whole Christian school system is "unchristian." For me this school is not a "parallel school," but a school with a high and holy purpose for God, country, and the world. I do not believe it is the direction of the Bible that children should be educated for twelve years in a school where the Christian religion must be excluded. The Christian school is not a matter of choice, or indifference, but a necessity.

MUST WE HAVE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS?

ADRIAN DE YOUNG

One would have to go far to find parents of Reformed persuasion who doubt in the least the necessity of the Christian home. That their home is thoroughly Christian they would be reluctant to claim. Family religion, instruction in the Christian faith and life, parental example, they admit, all come short of the ideal. But that their home must be Christian is not a question for debate. Baptismal vows, plain Bible teaching to say nothing of the benefits of such a home, preclude the question. Parents expect strong and frequent sermons on the subject. In fact, they like them.

In the same vein, it would require a long search to find a person fully persuaded of the Reformed faith who would deny the necessity of the Christian college. Some may question, however, from the measure of support the colleges receive, whether the number of the fully persuaded is very large. But convinced Calvinists are for the Christian college. Their reason for supporting the Christian college, is not simply to guarantee Reformed youth a better environment, to keep them unspotted from the world, and to give opportunity to hear strong preaching during Religious Emphasis Week. Nor is their reason primarily that the Christian college provides a supply of leaders for the churches of the denomination. To be sure such considerations count, but the final explanation is that higher education must be Christian. God, they believe, is at the heart of learning; the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Fully persuaded Reformed persons do not consider the necessity of the Christian college a debatable issue. Much of the will of God is involved. They will never agree that secular institutions are adequate, or that it is a matter of indifference in what views of God and his world people are educated. And they do not put the Christian college in the class of the fifth wheel on a wagon, arguing that a pious home and a sound church are enough.

To this member of the symposium Christian education is not an open question. It is not a matter of indifference what schools our children attend. The will of God that demands the Christian home demands the Christian school. The will of God that demands God-centered education on the college level demands it on the elementary and secondary also. Education does not begin to be significant when the child has grown to the college freshman stage. Experts say that even kindergarten is important. To be sure, while it is easier to see the necessity of the God-centered college than kindergarten, God must be in the latter nevertheless. And from appearances, parents unimpressed by the necessity of Christian education on elementary and secondary levels continue often in that frame

of mind when their children reach college age, for a minority of our youth enter Reformed colleges. Arguments for the Christian college have a hollow sound, if all through life's most formative years public education was adequate. If the religion of hearth and church proved sufficient all that while, it is trusted to make the difference four more years. If no sacrifice has been made to give children Christian schools, it may not be made when expensive college years begin. The Reformed Church is not served by the argument that public education is adequate, nor by the view that Christian schools are an open question.

That Christian education is imperative persons in a number of denominations have begun to recognize. Evangelicals have associated in several centers to provide Christian grade and high schools. What someone has called "the uneasy conscience of fundamentalism" can be heard saying that public education is not adequate. Trust in the educational force of the sermon, the Sunday school, and the home is recognized as unsound. The children of Christian homes and churches need Christian schools. The Reformed conscience ought to become uneasy also. In this age when almost every churchman decries the growing secularism, that souls seem bound to earth and time, without God in common life, it ought to be admitted that the strongest secularizing force in American life is public education, and that we are to no slight degree influenced by its neutrality. A colleague in a recent letter to the Editor of the *Church Herald* concluded that all our moaning about secularism in the churches and society is useless unless we do something constructive about it. What that constructive action might be the letter did not go on to say. The logical action to which it might have urged the Reformed conscience is a whole-hearted acceptance of the necessity of Christian schools, and that we join quickly with others of like faith in providing them for our children.

The basic question in the present discussion is: To whom does responsibility for the education of our children belong? For the Christian the Bible is normative, and he recognizes that the sovereign God assigns responsibility. While it is a common opinion that the Bible is silent about our subject, and that at the most Christian education is an expedient, one need not search long in Scripture to discover that God has spoken, assigning responsibility for the education of his children. The matter has not been left in the class of things indifferent. Knowing God, one feels it quite unthinkable that he would be silent on so very important a matter. Engaged as he is in unceasing discipline of his people, it would require a wide stretch of the imagination to think that he is not concerned about our training of the children he has given us.

This much is clear, that the sovereign God has not given the responsibility to the state. In an excellent summary of Romans 13:1-7 and

I Peter 2:13-15, we confess: "We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, hath appointed kings, princes, and magistrates, willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose he hath invested the magistracy with the sword, 'for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well' ".¹ From Scripture it appears that the state's function is negative; that God instituted it to hold sin in check, to ameliorate its consequences, and to protect the lives and property of citizens. And nowhere does the Bible assign to government the positive and important function of the training of our children. Nor is the function implied in the Bible's doctrine. It is one thing for the state to issue bulletins on the best method for preserving tomatoes, and quite another to undertake the responsibility for the education of our children. To assert that it must govern and educate is to make it supreme and having right to the total dedication of its citizens. That is the right implied in so-called "education for democracy." A Christian cannot concede that his children belong even to a democratic state.

If the sovereign God has not given government the responsibility to educate our children, the question remains: To whom has he given it? About this the Bible speaks plainly, laying the task upon two agencies: the home and the church. To parents God says: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (Deut. 6:6-9). In its worship the church responds to this charge: "We will not hide them from our children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (Ps. 78:4-7). Another decisive word is Paul's exhortation to parents regarding their children: "Nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4 R. V.). To the church our Saviour says: "Feed my lambs" (John 21:15).

1. *Belgic Confession of Faith*, Article XXXVI.

It will not do to object that the most the above passages do is to give the home and the church the task of teaching religion, leaving one to infer that the state must teach reading, writing and arithmetic. The Bible does not encourage the fallacy that religion and the three R's occupy separate compartments. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." The nurture for which the home is responsible includes education in God's Word and world. And it will not be doubted that the Lord has assigned his church the distinctive task to teach what the Scriptures teach. As she teaches the Word, she will make parents know their responsibility before God to provide a God-centered education for their children.

It is no objection that education by parents is impractical. We all know Christian parents that have proved it practical. They have not proved that it is easy or that is inexpensive. Organized in societies for Christian education, and separate from the church, they have sought to meet the obligation placed upon them by the Word of God. The result has been schools that are an extension of the home, not arms of the state, and teachers that represent the parents, not the government.

Nor must it be objected that parent-controlled education is undemocratic. Christians will not be impressed by the objection that private Christian schools are a threat to democracy. Quite the opposite is true; the strongest threat to American freedom comes from the state that becomes the guardian of values and the transmitter of our culture.

A second basic question in our discussion is: What place must God have in education? In the colonies his place was admitted as a basic law which begins: "Whereas by sundry acts and laws of this assembly, they have founded, erected, endowed, and provided for the maintenance of a college . . . and inferior schools of learning in every town and parish, for the education of the youth of the colony, which have (by the blessing of God) been very serviceable to promote useful learning and Christian knowledge. . . ." Instructions to a governor included the following: "It is our further will and pleasure that you recommend to the assembly to enter upon proper methods for the erecting and maintaining of schools in order to the training up of youth to reading and a necessary knowledge of the principles of religion." Records of eleven out of the thirteen colonies provide such quotations. They responded obviously to the Bible's principle: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever" (Ps: 111:10). A similar thought expressed in the first chapter of Proverbs and a number of other places encouraged the practice of including religion in learning.

That religion is related to education is widely held, and by no means is it a view limited to the proponents of Christian education. In a dis-

cussion of the subject, "The Teaching of Dogmatic Religion in a Democratic Society," Sophia L. Fahs of Union Theological Seminary pointed out that we are unrealistic when we try to separate religion from life and from general education. "Religion," she said, "has always been woven into the warp and woof of life. It is in history, it is in science, it is in every form of human experience. It is not only the Alpha and Omega of life; it is the very meaning of life. Religious beliefs furnish the framework within which other thinking is contained. They also often provide the motivation for certain types of action and they remove the impetus to other patterns of behavior."² The Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education in a 1953 report stated that "to be silent about religion may be, in effect, to make the public school an antireligious factor in the community. Silence creates the impression in the minds of the young that religion is unimportant and has nothing to contribute to the solution of the perennial and ultimate problems of human life. This negative consequence is all the more striking in a period when society is asking the public school to assume more and more responsibility for dealing with the cultural problems of growth and development. Therefore it is vitally important that the public school deal with religion."³ After a wide survey on how the public elementary and secondary schools deal with religion the Committee reported that although religion is often avoided on prudential grounds, few believe that it is irrelevant, inconsequential, or even detrimental to the aims of education.

Attempts to strengthen religion's position in education are not always universally approved, however. The Board of Superintendents of the New York City Board of Education last June adopted a guiding statement on the teaching of moral and spiritual values in the schools. The Board of Education is expected to consider it for adoption as a policy for the public schools. Among other things the statement declared: "The public schools must reinforce the program of the home and church in strengthening belief in God." Again it affirmed: "The notion of infinity cannot do other than lead to humbleness before God's handiwork. One can only say, 'When I consider the heavens, the work of thy hands'." To all this, according to a *New York Times* report, the New York Civil Liberties Union replied vigorously that the statement violates constitutional provisions prohibiting the state from aiding or attempting to influence, affect, or interfere with any or all religions. The state, it said, must respect the

2. Sophia L. Fahs, in *The Authoritarian Attempt to Capture Education*, John Dewey et al. (New York: King's Crown Press, 1945) p. 145.
3. Committee on Religion and Education, *The Function of the Public Schools in Dealing with Religion* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1953) p. 6.

right of a person to have no religion. To require teachers to impart spiritual instructions, as distinct from teaching accepted moral values in proper context, is an invasion of the teacher's own freedom of conscience. Court decisions unfavorable to religion in the schools are still in our recollection.

Religion, though widely recognized as related to learning, has a very limited place in the schools. In most cases it consists of planned religious activities. The survey mentioned earlier lists among these, such practices as: devotional opening exercises, including the reading of the Bible, prayers, religious songs, and religious talks; programs in celebration of religious holidays; sponsorship of religious clubs meeting in school buildings; and elective courses in Bible. The so-called non-sectarian approach prevails. From the survey one readily concludes that religion occupies a compartment next to learning.

Many educators, however, consider planned religious activity inadequate. "This problem," as stated by the American Council on Education, "is to find a way in public education to give due recognition to the place of religion in the culture and in the convictions of our people while at the same time safeguarding the separation of church and state."⁴ The Council rejects such solutions as teaching moral and spiritual values as an inadequate substitute. It recommends instead a "factual study" of religion which will not commit the schools to any particular religious belief. This study "is characterized by deliberate aim and definite plan to deal directly and factually with religion wherever and whenever it is intrinsic to learning experience in social studies, literature, art, music, and other fields. The aims of such study are to develop religious literacy, intelligent understanding of the role of religion in human affairs, and a sense of obligation to explore the resources that have been found in religion for achieving durable convictions and commitments. These aims arise from the requirements of general education which, to be effective, must view culture, human life, and personality whole."⁵ While few have adopted this approach, one superintendent in reply to the survey wrote: "Religion as an experience of mankind is taught in the World History course where the great religions are considered in their historical settings. This study includes the teaching, influence, and contribution of each of the religions."⁶ Again one may gather from the solution and the survey that the religion public education can accept is not that exclusive Christianity to which we are committed in our churches and homes but a highly neutral religion, not really Christian at all. It may even turn out

4. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

to be democracy, which Conrad Moehlman says is the religion of the American majority.⁷

What God is to have a place in education must not be considered an academic question. We cannot be satisfied with religious generalities, for in the covenant we are committed with our children to the God of the Bible. Parents are bound to teach their children the truths of God's Word. Educators are prepared, however, to resist the entry of God and his Word into public education. A prominent professor of philosophy has said: "The only religion appropriate to the democratic faith is a non-dogmatic religion. Or if by definition all religions are made dogmatic, then no religion is appropriate to the democratic faith."⁸ A Christian will admit that his children must have more than a religion of the majority or a religion without authority. The God we must have in the education of our children is the God in whose name they were baptized. And it is his place to be taken into account at every step. Children must not be left to figure out his relation to his world for themselves, nor to believe that one can have knowledge of the truth without a knowledge of the true God. We must admit that if education is important, it is all-important to have God in it, and that without him there is no learning at all. God will not be kept in a compartment. He is jealous about his Name, and has never been known to favor neutrality.

To this writer it seems clear that Christian schools are the answer demanded by both of his suggested basic questions. These have primary reference not to the general public but to parents in the Reformed Church in America. And a very heavy burden of proof rests on those who may insist that a neutral state may introduce our children to God's world, or that the religion public education can accept is adequate to learning.

7. Conrad H. Moehlman, *School and Church: The American Way* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944) p. IX.

8. Charles W. Morris, in *The Authoritarian Attempt to Capture Education*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

The resumption of work on Western's campus after the Christmas recess brought with it another one of our guest lecturers. On January 18 and 19, Dr. Bruce M. Metzger, Princeton Theological Seminary, directed our thinking on the general theme "Aspects of the Teaching Ministry of Jesus Christ." Dr. Metzger presented three different facets which he entitled "The Form of Jesus' Teaching," "The Miracles of Jesus as a Mode of Teaching" and "The Prayer Jesus Taught His Disciples."

Continuing in the New Testament, Professor Richard C. Oudersluys presented his lecture on February 2 in an area which has been his special interest and particular responsibility within our denomination. In his "Liturgy in the New Testament" he pointed out that the charismatic worship of the Corinthian church was not normative. Rather, the antecedents were the synagogue and temple worship with the sacrificial system replaced by the service of the upper room. Thus the record of the Church for the period following the apostolic century portrayed a well-defined form which had grown out of synagogue worship with its readings, prayers, exposition and alms giving. Professor Oudersluys concluded his lecture by portraying how the liturgy affected certain New Testament writings with the Apocalypse of John por-

traying the perfected heavenly worship and the great final eucharist of which our liturgy is to be anticipatory and preparatory.

On February 21 and 22, Dr. John H. Piet, Missionary, South India, addressed us in the dual capacity of guest lecturer as well as a faculty member by virtue of his interim appointment as professor during his furlough. Because of his work and the success he has experienced, Dr. Piet was eminently qualified to speak on the subject "The Task of the Church in the Pagan World." The three lectures "The Message," "The Man" and "The Method" were as relevant for us who will minister within the limits of our nation as for those who plan to serve abroad.

Professor M. Eugene Osterhaven presented his faculty lecture, March 7, on the subject "The Significance of the Ascension to Reformed Theology." Professor Osterhaven underscored the fact that the biblical doctrines of the ascension and the gift of the Holy Spirit have been given little attention in our creeds but that Reformed Theology has always emphasized the Lordship of Christ. The renewed emphasis today on the ascension and Holy Spirit has made its impact on the belief of Christ's Lordship over all aspects of life.

The beginning of the third quarter was also the beginning of our much looked for series of lectures by Professor Wilhelm Niesel of the Kirchliche Hochschule, Wuppertal, Germany. Professor Niesel is a noted authority on John Calvin and is lecturing on the Theology of Calvin daily each week, Tuesday through Friday, at 10:15 A.M. Our guest spent one week lecturing at Eden Theological Seminary and at Mission House Seminary, schools of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The week beginning April 9 he will be on the campus of McCormick Seminary and Dubuque Seminary. He will finish his series the last week in April. On his way back to Germany he will lecture at Princeton Seminary and New Brunswick Seminary. We are delighted to have this scholar with us and we are greatly enriched in our understanding of John Calvin through these lectures.

The Adelpia Society recently completed an inspiring and informative course on "Church Doctrine" with the Rev. Abraham Rynbrandt, '25, as leader. Professor Elton Eenigenburg is beginning a series of lectures on "American Cults" which will be the last series of lectures for this school year. The meeting held January 23 centered around "Hymns We Love" with special numbers and group singing. *The Hymnbook* was featured in this meeting. On February 27, the society was privileged to have Mrs. Bastian Kruithof give a book review of *An Episode of Sparrows* by Rumer Godden.

ADELPHIC MEETINGS

The mid-year election of officers brought John Busman to the vice-presidency, and thus to the task of planning our weekly meetings. These, we feel, have been of very fine quality. The first meeting of the year featured Professor M. Eugene Osterhaven, who spoke on the ever-current subject of "Infant Baptism." The following week, January 17, Rev. Harold Englund, '50, talked to us about "Worship in the Church." The last two Tuesdays of January featured Rev. Fred Dolphin, '45, speaking on "The History of Revival in America," and a talk about Youth for Christ as an arm of the church by Mr. Gilbert Van Wynen. Because of various conflicting activities, we could have only one meeting during the month of February. This was on the 7th, with Rev. James Schut, '39, addressing us on the subject, "Pastoral Counselling—Let's Save Marriage." On March 6th Rev. Harry Zegerius, '36, told us about our domestic mission work among Dutch immigrants in Canada. And on March 13th the entire seminary family joined in the fellowship of our annual stag banquet.

Several meetings of a missionary character have been presented by the Goyim Fellowship this year. A few of the latest are mentioned here.

On Jan. 6, the Rev. Joshua Hogenboom, '28, spoke to an interested audience on the general topic, "Growing Pains: R.C.A." The

group then discussed problems related to church extension. Refreshments followed a very profitable question period.

Feb. 10 found about 40 people gathered to witness in slides and to hear in words the experiences of Bill Estell, seminary junior with three years of short-term missionary work behind him spent in Japan. The excellent variety of his slides and the interesting stories he told about his work made it an evening long to be remembered. A curio display also served to enhance the meeting.

On March 20, Goyim sponsored a joint Adelphic-Adelphia meeting celebrating the successful conclusion of the Seminary Mission Drive held in November. Over \$2300 has been received for the work of Dr. John Piet in India. Dr. John De-Valois addressed the group on the subject of his work in India, and special music was furnished by Adelpia and the Western Seminary Choir. The Rev. Harold Leestma, '42, presided at the meeting.

The Christian Action Group has continued to meet each month, probing into crucial areas with respect to Christian thought and conduct. On Thursday afternoon, January 12, Dr. D. Ivan Dykstra, '38, Chairman of General Synod's Committee "International Justice and Good Will" led the discussion on the topic "The Relevance of Christian Love in a World of Power Politics." A month later, February 16, Professor Elton M. Eenigen-

burg guided our thinking on the problem of "Democracy and the Christian tradition."

WESTERN SEMINARY MEN'S CHOIR

The present singing organization on Western's campus is the outgrowth of two forces, the desire of members of the student body to sing, and requests from both inside and outside the seminary for a group to perform on special occasions. Past choirs have included both students and their wives or lady friends. The present group is limited to male students, thus the qualifying "Men's" in our title. The choir began, spring of '55, to practice and perform.

As requests came to us it became apparent that a workable group of men was necessary. Thus came the present organization with its directive constitution. Reasons for existing, organizational necessities such as limited membership, tryouts, offices, regulations, and future aims are embodied in our constitution and the minutes of our meetings. Carl Van Farowe serves as president and Nevin Webster as director.

The purpose is to minister to the student body and the church through the medium of music. Our appearances in churches and at special occasions outside the seminary will give opportunity for our group to bring spiritual inspiration and increase the bond of fellowship between the seminary and the church at large.

Western has had a number of short-lived choirs throughout the years. It is the desire of the present group that it will not follow in their train, but will be a continuous organization. As our existence continues we intend that we should become an intimate and integrated part of the curriculum. The development of a more complete music program is expected to be one of the fruits of our labor. Future scheduling of programs will be by request on the part of the various

churches or church related organizations.

At the time that our publication is going to press, we find ourselves in the beginning of the third and final quarter of the school year. This is a historic moment for the Seniors who are finishing their work in these halls and will be leaving to assume their positions of responsibility in the Reformed Church as it propagates the gospel throughout the world.

BOOK REVIEWS

New Testament Commentary: Exposition of I and II Thessalonians, by William Hendricksen, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955. Pp. viii-214. \$4.50.

This volume dealing with Paul's letters to the Thessalonians is part of Dr. Hendricksen's ambitious project to write a commentary on all the books of the New Testament. The two volumes on the Gospel of John were published in 1953-1954 as the inauguration of the set. Dr. Hendricksen was formerly the professor of New Testament Literature at Calvin Seminary and presently serves as pastor of a church in Byron Center, Michigan.

To present such introductory matters to the study of I and II Thessalonians as the historical background, the time and place of writing, the purpose, answers to objections with regard to Pauline authorship, and an outline of the general contents, the author devotes thirty-one pages at the outset of his book. This is rather brief treatment except as to authorship. There he goes into more detail by adducing lists of phrases that these letters have in common with other acknowledged Pauline correspondence. In all the introductory views, he is quite conservative.

Building upon his outline of general contents, Dr. Hendricksen treats each section of the letters in a set manner. He gives a summary of contents, his own translation of the Biblical passage, a verse-by-verse commentary, and a synthesis. There is actually no need for both the outlined summary and paragraphing that summary in slightly longer form in the synthesis. Summary and synthesis duplicate one another in sentence after sentence, so one or the other could readily be eliminated. The translation, although often awkward, is solidly

based on a scholarly knowledge of the Greek language. It could not stand apart from the commentary as an acceptable English translation, but it is suitable here as a more exact reproduction of the Greek style and grammatical relationships in Paul's involved sentences. The author's tendency to let the Greek overwhelm his English style is especially evident in I Thessalonians 5:19-24 (p. 133):

19. The Spirit do not quench.

20. Prophetic utterances do not despise, 21. but test all things: to the good hold on; 22. from every form of evil hold off.

23. And may he, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through, and without flaw be your spirit, and your soul-and-body without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ may it be kept.

24. Reliable is the One who calls you, who will also do it.

For the most part, the commentary itself seems to be geared to the lay reader. A knowledge of Greek is not necessary to follow the exposition, even though the Greek words are now and again brought into the text. In problems of textual criticism, Dr. Hendricksen almost always agrees with the reading that Nestle gives, but does not cite or discuss the relative merits of the various witnesses to the text. Occasionally this lack of detail gives the reader the wrong impression. On page 44 (note 32) he says, "The addition 'from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' is not supported by the best texts." He is probably right in rejecting the reading, but he excludes from "the best texts" in this case *Aleph* (Codex Sinaiticus, fourth century), *A* (Codex Alexandrinus, fifth century), *I* (the Freer

Codex, fifth or sixth century) and D (Codex Claromontanus, sixth century). Another case in point is the textual reference on page 206 (note 134). Here "the somewhat better attested infinitive" has no important opposition at all. Since he follows Nestle in all cases but one in which Nestle himself disagrees with two of the three editors upon which his text is based, Dr. Hendricksen's judgment is quite sound. In one matter at least he is unnecessarily scholarly. Both his quotations from Calvin's commentaries are in Latin. Not many Americans will read Latin when English translations of Calvin's works are readily available.

The more technical grammatical and syntactical points are put in the footnotes. Note 68 (pp. 85-86) is a good example. On a few points this reviewer ventures to disagree with Dr. Hendricksen. On p. 91 he deliberates on *sterxai* and decides on the optative. Does not the preceding *eis to* require the infinitive? The "crisp imperatives" on page 136 must be viewed as linear rather than punctiliar. *Ho kalon* is referred to as an aorist participle (p. 142), but it is a present participle. Sharp's Rule on the article is limited by the author to nouns other than proper names, such as *Kupios* may sometimes be. Therefore, he rejects the view that II Thessalonians 1:12 refers to Jesus Christ as God and Lord. This is one of three cases A. T. Robertson cites in his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (p. 786) in which "one person may be described."

Special attention should be called to the author's discussion of election (p. 48ff.), *pragma* (p. 101ff.), after-life (p. 110ff.), the holy kiss (p. 142ff.), prophets (p. 139ff.), trichotomy (which is rejected, p. 146ff.) and the Antichrist (p. 170ff.). He has apparently made special studies on these subjects among others. Annoying to the one who reads through the book but possibly helpful to the one looking up a particular passage, are the innumerable

cross-references. The author also refers often to his other writings, as well as those of other authors.

In general the style of the book facilitates the location of a particular passage. Bold-face type and italics are used freely to emphasize the scriptural quotations and important words or subjects. Parenthetical additions are also numerous and are more disrupting than helpful in some cases, especially if the sentence is already rather complex. Two unusual usages stand out in the book. The author employs "you" and "your" for the plural, and says he employs "you" and "your" for the singular. However, there are only plurals in the Thessalonian letters, so the only "your" (p. 81) and hybrid "yo u" (sic p. 134) are mistakes. No doubt the distinction is intended to apply to all the New Testament books, and it was worth while in John, but here it is only extra work for the printer. The second unusual usage is the writing of "sothat" for "so that" at least fifty-seven times. "So that," in separated form, occurs eight times, mostly in the translation. The reason for this usage is not apparent.

A few other errors may have occurred in printing such as "Bengal" for "Bengel" on page 68, "Thessalonions" and "J. D. David" in the bibliography on page 214, and "unlawless" on page 178.

The comparison of the distance between Philippi and Thessalonica with the distance between cities listed on page 6 was amusing. It could readily be seen that the author is a Dutch inhabitant of Michigan. In his attitude toward the Old Testament law (p. 137) and in his use of the American Standard Version's "Jehovah" (pp. 117, 159), he also demonstrates his denominational affiliation. These bring the reader closer to the personality of the author. Anyone who has spent some years in the area of Grand Rapids and Holland will understand how one becomes a very part of such an area and its people.

Dr. Hendricksen has done a commendable piece of work, pointing the serious student of the Bible to the rewards of deeper study, and providing much material for those who need help on a particular passage. This addition to the *New Testament Commentary* will be welcomed, especially by those who feel repelled by commentaries whose authors exhibit a different view of Biblical inspiration. The stronger readers, who can find helpful avenues to understanding even in the more liberal commentaries, may not find as much need for this book on their shelves.

—SYLVIO J. SCORZA

Protestant Christianity Interpreted Through Its Development, by John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954. Pp. xii-340. \$4.50.

This book is a study of the historical development of Protestantism. It has characteristics which distinguish it from many other books on Protestantism. Books on this subject are mainly interested in the movement for its theological basis as the only explanation for its inner dynamic. Essays such as Paul Tillich's, *The Protestant Era*, Hugh Thompson Kerr, Jr.'s, *Positive Protestantism*, James Hastings Nichols', *A Primer for Protestants*, and the new book by John S. Whale, *A Protestant Tradition*, are examples of this type of approach. In the book under review, the approach has been different.

Dr. Dillenberger and Dr. Welch attempt to picture and delineate Protestantism as they studied it in its historical as well as its theological development. It is a difficult task to perform and that is probably the reason why no adequate job has been done on the subject before. Because of the diversity in Protestantism, it is not easy to locate a dominant motif or find an adequate framework on which to build a study such as this. Major movements in mod-

ern European church history, for instance, are more easily studied as individual units than as movements that have an effect or influence on one another. And, likewise, the development of Protestantism is almost impossible to trace through the histories of the multitudinous denominations of Protestantism. Movements in Protestantism or denominations, as a whole, do not give an adequate picture of Protestantism. In view of this major difficulty, the authors have attempted to give us a picture of the whole of Protestantism through the proper understanding of significant major forces and certain key figures who have been influential in giving Protestantism its direction and thought.

Another method used to overcome this difficulty in tracing the historical development of Protestantism is the free use of interpretation, by the authors, of the major events and personalities. The authors have followed a current trend (and a good one) to interpret the facts that they encounter in their studies. The facts of Protestantism do not in themselves tell its story. The authors present what they consider to be the inner dynamic of Protestantism with an abundance of interpretation.

Toward this goal of interpreting the historical development of Protestantism, the authors have gone a great distance. First of all, a summary of Luther and Calvin's theology is given as the earliest theological basis of Protestantism. The theology of Luther and Calvin is not contrasted nor developed individually. Since Protestantism is greatly indebted to both men, they are presented in a comprehensive casting of their theological thought. Anabaptism is given an adequate amount of space and the movement is interpreted in its conflict with the theology of the Reformers. Protestantism is just beginning to realize their contributions to its life and thought.

The importance of the ecumenical synod of Dort is placed in proper perspective and treated fully. No one church

can claim the theological results of Dort for they belong to Protestantism as a whole. The authors have also done us a favor by contrasting the thought of Calvin and the Calvinism of Dort. Puritanism and its related movements and Puritanism as related to orthodox Calvinism are described fully. This was done so that the contrast of the similarities of Calvinism with Puritanism could be seen and also the dissimilarities seen because there is confusion at this point even among scholars. (e.g., Wilhelm Pauck feels that Puritanism and Calvinism do not have as close a relationship as generally assumed.) Another aspect of Protestantism which is often difficult to understand is the relationship of philosophical movements to the theological developments in Protestantism. Again, at this point, there is a clear and concise explanation and it is extremely helpful.

A full treatment of Liberalism is given. Although the theological positions of the authors are close to certain points in Liberal theology, Liberalism is still studied in its historical aspects objectively. Liberalism has made its contributions to the Protestant development but it is also criticized for its missteps. The reason why it was rejected in part by the Christian church is clearly shown.

A summary of the modern missionary movement is as good as can be found anywhere. The problems that the ecumenical movement faces are discussed in a frank and thorough manner. The last part of the book is a "tract for the times." This final chapter spells out the current theological thought as it best reveals the theology of the Protestant church as a whole today. This chapter also suggests to the Christian church the direction in which it should go in order to fulfill its mission. The major part of the book will be valuable because of the excellent presentation of the historical development of Protestantism with its sane and properly critical interpretation of what makes up Protestantism. Therefore, this final chapter

is of less interest although it is a positive construction of current theological thought.

As full and ample interpretation is given to men and movements in Protestantism, disagreement with the authors will also come in regard to interpretation. Practically no quarrel can be made with the selection of source materials used or with the authors dependence upon good secondary sources. Their excellent knowledge of their subject is admirable and it reflects their teaching ministry in the classrooms of Yale, Harvard, and Columbia Universities. The authors' fondness for Episcopalianism is one of the most subjective motifs of the book. They are very critical of Fundamentalism and its contributions or lack of contributions to Protestantism. Let it be said that their understanding of Fundamentalism is as good as can be found in any scholarly study on the subject (as contrasted with the very confused understanding of Fundamentalism in Edwin Burt's *Types of Religious Philosophy*). Yet in the authors' dislike of the whole general movement, they fail to see Fundamentalism in its true historical development. Fundamentalism prior to 1925 stemmed from the statements of "fundamentals" which were stated in a series of twelve tracts circa 1909. This type of historic Fundamentalism has a close relationship to Conservative Protestantism in some respects today. But the authors fail to see fully the internal change in Fundamentalism. The charges which they bring against conservative Protestantism and present day Fundamentalism are true only of the pre-millennial and dispensational types of Fundamentalism. This type is rightfully criticized for its sterility and rigidity of theological views and its seventeenth century view of science. Conservative Protestantism today accepts certain results of Biblical criticism, it has an open-mindedness in general toward current theological trends, and it attempts to understand them and come to grips with them, even to appropriate certain parts of them. Conser-

vative Protestantism is aware of the social aspects of Christianity and it has a program to deal with them. It is not afraid to confront modern scientific knowledge. In addition to all of these attitudes, conservative Protestantism formulates a positive approach to the world in its need for the Christian faith and gospel.

The book on the whole is excellent. The outline of the material is very clear, and the book is well written. The index is complete. Not only can the book be used well in the college room, for which it is intended, but it is also useful to the seminarian who needs a unified picture of the nature and growth of Protestantism. The pastor can find it useful for coming to understand areas with which he is not well acquainted.

—ELTON J. BRUINS.

The Protestant Tradition, by J. S. Whale, Cambridge: University Press, 1955. Pp. xiii-344. \$3.75.

This volume is one of those publications which grew out of a series of lectures by its author. In this case the book contains the substance of two lectures by Dr. Whale. The content of these lectures has been gathered under four heads. The first three are the major divisions of Protestantism: Luther, Calvin, and the Sect-type. The last section of the book is entitled "Modern Issues."

Under his discussion of Luther and the fountainhead of the Reformation, Dr. Whale comprehensively delineates the true background, concluding that the root cause was Luther's rediscovery of biblical truth. The author makes a significant defense of Luther's contemporary relevance by pointing out that all the characteristics of truly modern theology (realism, existentialism, and paradox) are present in Luther's theology.

In a tangential consideration of the Roman Catholic concept of sacramental

grace, the author sets out in bold relief the error of any ecclesiastical practice which substitutes a thing or an act for the personal, existential aspects of grace. A bit of reflection will convince any reader that Protestantism is also infected with this all-too-human tendency to attach confidence (I doubt that this is true biblical faith) to some external act or object.

Turning to Calvin's place in the Protestant tradition, Dr. Whale compares him to Luther as a hedgehog to a fox. That is, Calvin is considered to be defensive and systematic whereas Luther is offensive and creative. This is a new way of expressing the inevitable comparison and, while not too complimentary to Calvin, it contains a great deal of truth.

From this point the author deserts objectivity somewhat and launches into an outspoken and highly ambiguous criticism of systematics in general. Yet he comes back to a hollow kind of appreciation for Calvinism as a necessary evil. For Dr. Whale, Calvinism is justifiable only empirically and pragmatically—history has thus vindicated an essentially unfortunate development. We wonder, has the historical test nothing more than a mere pragmatic value? I feel that the real problem in Dr. Whale's analysis at this point is an apparently presupposed, clearcut dichotomy which makes Luther and Calvin differ in kind rather than in degree. If this is his presupposition, then his obvious sympathy with Lutheran thought almost commits him to a critical attitude toward Calvin.

Going on to the matter of Calvin's theocentricism, the author is wholly unsympathetic. He calls it a stark determination and a logical abstraction. The approach here is one of criticism without evaluation. Dr. Whale seems to overlook the fact that the paradox produced by Calvin's theocentricism is not of Calvin's origin—it is the biblical paradox.

The author's comparison of Luther and Calvin at the point of church-state

relations is interesting and illuminating. He calls Calvin the Genevan "pope" and maintains that this position stems from the fact that Calvin is a "man of law."

Perhaps it is significant and indicates something of the author's sympathies that he devotes one hundred thirteen pages to Luther and only fifty-two to Calvin.

Under the third division of his book, the author attempts an analysis of the sect-type of Protestantism. He does this under three principles: the personal principle, the voluntary principle and the spiritual principle. His approach, certainly a good one, is to make his evaluation, not on the basis of the violent actions of certain radical groups which he considers to be perversions of the true sect-type, but on the basis of the group's foundational principles. Dr. Whale feels that this division of Protestantism represents the full and natural extent of the pendulum's swing away from Rome.

In the last division of the book, the author makes some very worthwhile observations on the "Modern Issues" of toleration, church-state relations, and ecumenism. Especially in the last matter he makes a discerning analysis, showing clearly the polar extremes of this movement toward unity and indicating some practical ways of living in a fruitful tension between these extremes.

If I were to evaluate the writing ability of the author on the basis of the first three-fourths of this book, it would be largely negative. His writing is not very lucid. At times he seems to be following his own personal and obscure associations which makes his writing appear more like compilation than progressive thought. The over-liberal use of foreign terms, in and out of parentheses, is a definite hindrance to the flow of thought even in the case of languages which the reader understands.

In the fourth section of the book, however, the quality of writing changes. Here Dr. Whale begins real interpre-

tation and evaluation. The writing is more clear, the logical progression of thought is discernible, and extensive quotations and foreign words almost disappear. In short, one would think that a different writer had finished the book.

There is one other serious objection to be registered. Nowhere in his book does Dr. Whale indicate the scope or purpose of this work. This is like being taken on a ride with a stranger who refuses to tell you where he is taking you. You need not fear bodily harm but you cannot be sure that the ride is worthwhile either before or after the trip. You know neither where you are going nor where you have been. This lack of purpose seems to be reflected in the indistinct structure of the book and makes any real evaluation very difficult. When one arrives at the end of the book, he feels that the author has had something to say but he isn't sure what it was.

— GARRET WILTERDINK.

Modern Christian Movements, by John T. McNeill, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954. Pp. 197. \$3.50.

As one of the foremost contemporary interpreters of the life and significance of John Calvin, Mr. McNeill needs no introduction to Reformed readers. Nor is it surprising, therefore, that his present volume has already received considerable attention from our clergy. Its concern, however, is not specifically with Calvinism; rather, it represents something almost unique in recent religious literature. Apparently the pre-occupation of modern thinking with the religious ramifications of history has largely precluded a comparable interest in the historical ramifications of religion. "It is a commonplace in the Church history fraternity," McNeill observes, "that we have no good history, either scholarly or popular, of Christianity in the modern era. Not even such a book

as this one has appeared, employing illustrations from typical sources to exhibit briefly the principal Western Christian movements since the Reformation and to show the links that connect them" (p. 14).

As something of a pioneer effort, therefore, the book is rather more descriptive than interpretive. Mr. McNeill purports simply "to make more available some of the stored-up riches of the modern centuries" for the "perplexed generation" to which "religion seems to be making a fresh appeal" (p. 14). Of course there is implicit in the selection and fabrication of materials an act of interpretation, and it is the provocative character of the act as Mr. McNeill has effected it which challenges one to relate for himself the historical significance of these riches to his present denominational circumstances (cf. p. 9).

McNeill is rightly concerned, in consistency with his purpose, to typify only those movements which are indigenous to Western Christianity and which are the precipitate of the Reformation. Accordingly, he discerns six relatively well-defined currents of action and reaction, three of which are Calvinist (English Puritanism, Evangelicalism, and Ecumenicalism), one of which is Lutheran (German Pietism), another Anglo-catholic (Tractarianism), and the other Roman (Modern Catholicism). Even a definitive, historical phenomenon such as Liberalism, therefore, despite its venerability and immense significance, does not qualify for special consideration because, until it identified itself with the Evangelical Christian cause in the nineteenth century, it was as inimical to Protestantism as it had long been to Romanism.

The Reformation was a liberal phenomenon, but even when it had lost much of its momentum near the end of the sixteenth century, it distinguished itself from embryonic Liberalism by refusing to secularize. Puritanism (seventeenth century), the first movement for continued reform, was largely liberal

(Baxter, Adams, Milton), occasionally radical (Hutchinson, Cromwell) in the dual impetus it gave to purity of religion and the rise of the middle class. Only when its social objectives dissociated themselves in the following century from their religious inception, when the Calvinistic principle of economy which characterized Puritanism in all its diversity (p. 20) served less the interests of Christian witness than those of class advantage, only then did liberal Puritanism become reactionary Liberalism—which would seem a contradiction in terms if it weren't a present reality.

Although the English Puritan contributed infinitely more to the character of subsequent Protestant orthodoxy than to the emergence of nascent Liberalism, it was his preoccupation with the extirpation of sin and secularism from Church and self which protected him from the excesses of overconfident and incontinent laissez-faire. Theological disputation was not an issue to Puritans because of their intense concern for the reality of sin (p. 29). Perhaps this is why "it was Calvin . . . whom the Puritans held in highest esteem as a theologian" (p. 26) and why it was the neatly packaged Federal Calvinism of Cocceius which the generality of Puritans embraced (cf. pp. 31-32). The Puritan in his day was liberal, but it was not until he became "Enlightened" (eighteenth century) and religiously indifferent that he became a Liberal.

The eighteenth was a century of revolution. Something revolutionary was necessary to combat the sophisticated skepticism of a liberal Liberalism-gone-secular and to resuscitate the moribund "neonomianism" of a reactionary Puritanism which had petrified (see p. 77). Evangelicalism surpassed even German Pietism in its opposition to prevailing (Calvinist and Lutheran) scholastic orthodoxy (p. 77). To the new Liberal the movement was of course reactionary in its determination to preserve the Christian faith from extinction (cf. p. 75), but to the pusillanimous Puritan

it was clearly radical in deciding to do so not by apology but by revival.

At its inception, at least, Evangelicalism was a peculiarly Calvinistic phenomenon (pp. 79, 80, et al.), preeminently Puritan in inspiration (p. 77), predominantly Pietist in expression (cf. p. 81). It burgeoned in almost every part of the Protestant world, but it survives largely in America. Only the American frontier was sufficiently big and flexible to accommodate its principal innovation, which Mr. McNeill believes to be "the apostolic passion for the regeneration of individual souls" (p. 81). But if, as he insists, this element "was not new in any absolute sense" (p. 81), where did it come from and how did it find its way into Evangelicalism? Indeed, if Evangelicalism is so profoundly indebted to Pietism (cf. p. 81), why does it differ so from the German variety (cf. Trinterud)? We believe we have an answer which history has largely overlooked.

Coevally with English Puritanism there had occurred in the Netherlands a pietist revolt of stunning consequences. Although its relatedness to German Pietism is tenuous (see p. 52), except for the inspiration which its charity projects afforded Francke (p. 62), its interaction with Puritanism is probable (p. 52). Like Puritanism it sought ecclesiastical reform, but unlike Puritanism it repudiated the Covenant Theology. Its leaders, Teelinck, van Lodensteyn, and Voet, were strongly mystical and individualistic, and one of the most determinative figures in early Evangelicalism, Theodorus Frelinghuysen, is known to have reflected Voetian influences. The Evangelical revival as it affected the Reformed Church in the American colonies was supported by members of the Coetus faction, many of whom endorsed Voetian ecclesiastical reforms, most of whom subscribed specifically to Voet's notion of the anti-intellectual character and inspirational function of the clergy, and some of whom openly professed the designation "Voetian." McNeill acknowledges the

impact of Frelinghuysen (and therefore, we believe, of Dutch Pietism) upon Presbyterianism and Congregationalism through Tennent and Edwards (p. 82), who supplied the Awakening with its Calvinist theological rationale.

The Evangelical Revival witnessed a phenomenon which many Calvinists had theretofore regarded as an impossibility. The enthusiasm and zeal of John Wesley thoroughly confuted the belief "that Arminianism could bring forth no fruit of conversion, no rescue of men from the power of Satan" (p. 80). So momentous was the Wesleyan novelty that it threatened to appropriate the Revivals and make them its own. Many Calvinists of the now-reactionary "neonomian" school, on the assumption that Arminianism breeds Liberalism (which today is also reactionary), regard most revivalism with suspicion for precisely this reason. But one of the most "notorious" reactionaries of all time, the prolific Tractarian John Henry Newman, renounced his Calvinist Evangelical friends (p. 114) because it was "they (who) played into the hands of the Liberals" (p. 115). And a few years later he openly embraced the rather Arminian faith of Roman Catholicism (p. 121), which had long execrated the Calvinism of Bishop Jansen, whose spiritual descendants associated themselves with Liberal Romans in 1870 (p. 171). The fact of the matter is that the generality of American Evangelicals who emerged from the Awakenings were no more Liberals, in religion at least, than Calvinists, Anglican Catholics, or Romanists. At least as powerful and outspoken as the Liberal Evangelicals who compromised with "the new knowledge" of the nineteenth century and soon lost their identity as Evangelicals was the reactionary new Fundamentalist Evangelicalism, which is still alive and flourishing (p. 98).

There is a strange irony in the reticence of contemporary right-of-center Calvinism to espouse the cause of modern Ecumenicalism. For one thing, it is eminently Reformed in principle (see

pp. 132f.). For another, it was eloquently proclaimed by the "mere Catholic" Puritan Richard Baxter (pp. 80, 136-7). And further, it is in the essential nature not only of Evangelicalism at large but of Fundamentalism in particular (p. 99). Modern Ecumenicalism is properly termed a "revival" (p. 149) because of the moratorium which had been placed upon its development by the ecclesiastical incursion of Liberalism. Earlier Liberalism had regarded the Church with contempt, as a vestige of unenlightened primitivity. Modification of this attitude may well have begun with Jeremy Bentham, who first suggested the usefulness of an Erastian Church for the administration of State philanthropies and benevolences (cf. p. 109). It is not the whole truth, therefore, to say that in the nineteenth century an apostate Protestantism enlisted its energies in behalf of Liberalism; to some extent it was Liberalism which joined the Church. The reaction was Fundamentalism (p. 98), and the ecumenical spirit of Evangelicalism went sectarian, Liberals associating only with Liberals and Fundamentalists only with Fundamentalists.

There is additional irony in the fact that it was unallied conservative Protestantism which suffered most from the rift. The plight of the Reformed Church in America is a case in point—and for clarifying the issues we are much indebted to McNeill's study. Traditionally pressured from the right by Coccoean neonomanism (Christian Reformed) and from the left by Voetian pietism (Nederduitsch), the Reformed Church has been additionally maligned by Liberals for its Calvinist theology and by Fundamentalists for its Calvinist social concern. The evils of resentment have been compounded of fear and misunderstanding. The eastern portion of the Church had passed through—indeed had given impetus to—the Evangelical movement; the Liberal incursion which it experienced was essentially Anglo-Saxon (Benthamite) in character and late nineteenth century in manifestation. The

western portion of the Church came into existence too late to experience the Evangelical Awakenings, and as a result of the battle it had waged earlier in the nineteenth century with German Liberalism (Schleiermacherian), which was permeating the State Church in the Netherlands, it was suspicious of Liberalism in any guise. Largely Federalist in theology, the newly established western Church suspected anything remotely Erastian, antinomian, or modernistic and in 1857 split asunder over the alleged breach of faith and trust which its affiliation with a modern Evangelical Church was thought to have constituted. The eastern Church, ever striving to remain true to its Reformed heritage, has consistently lost members both to avowedly Liberal groups and more especially to Fundamentalism. America's south and southwest, for example, are sprinkled with Baptists, Methodists, Cumberland Presbyterians, Disciples and others of Fundamentalist inclination and Dutch Pietist origin. And the western Church, still striving to ignore the quixotic accusations of its neonoman neighbors, has drifted ever closer to Fundamentalism.

And what of the future? Read page 152 of John T. McNeill's *Modern Christian Movements*.

—DAVID HAGER.

Christianity and Symbolism, by F. W. Dillistone, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955. Pp. 7-320. \$4.50.

The basic problems dealt with in this book may be associated with the names of Paul Tillich and Rudolph Bultmann. With the former, it emphasizes the fact that modern man has experienced a widespread decay in his general understanding and use of symbols. With the latter, it raises the question as to what extent the historical forms of the Christian faith can be meaningful to men living in an age of science and technology.

The initial intent of this volume was to set forth the author's studies on the doctrines of the sacraments, but in the process, he felt the need of setting them within the wider context of man's use of symbols throughout his long historical career. The satisfaction of this need supplies the over-all plan of the book. In Chapters I-VI, the various types of symbolism are treated. So vast is this subject, that the book at times takes on the aspect of a short history of mankind. Following an introductory chapter in which an attempt is made to differentiate between signs, symbols, and sacraments, Dillistone examines man's relation to his natural environment and his creation of symbolic forms within this context. Next, he looks at various kinds of time-symbolism, giving particular attention to its development within the Christian tradition. Passing then to man's social environment, he examines in turn the significance of symbolic personal figures, of symbolic language-forms, and of symbolic outward activities.

Symbolism receives more emphasis than Christianity in this general section. Within each chapter, the approach is fundamentally the same. Whether it be the symbolism of nature, time or language, the subject is traced from its origins in primitive society, through its manifestations in ancient civilizations, to the contemporary view. Dillistone admits to limitations in a field so extensive, and is constantly dependent on experts in the areas surveyed. To discuss the universal history of symbolism in nature, time, language, persons, and actions within less than two hundred pages requires that the discussion be restricted to broadest outline. Nevertheless, for anyone who has never been aware of the major role of the symbol in human life, these chapters provide a well written and informative introduction to a fascinating subject.

Important as these background studies are, Dillistone rightly points out that the most significant among man's symbolic religious activities have been the

ceremonies associated on the one hand with the sanctification of generation and initiation, on the other hand with the reversal of degeneration and alienation. The first group of these ceremonies has normally involved such water-ritual as lustrations, bathings, and sprinklings; the second group has been associated with forms of sacrificial offering including the offering of food, the slaying of victims, the manipulation of blood and the participation in communal meals. Convinced that within the Christian context the first is gathered up into the drama of Baptism, the second into that of the Eucharist, Dillistone proceeds to examine the origin and patterns of these dramatic symbols in chapters VII-IX.

Christian Baptism is viewed against the background of two types of water symbolism: first, age-old images associated either with rebirth through a descent into the dark waters which typify the womb of life or with victory gained through a successful encounter with the hostile forces who make the waters their habitation; second, practical signs of cleansing from defilement, or the seal of separation from the realm of evil.

Rebirth, victory, cleansing, and separation all contributed something to the understanding of Baptism in the early church. But in succeeding centuries, the ceremony came too easily to be regarded as the necessary and recognized *sign* of admission into Church membership. Of the reformers who re-opened the whole question of the meaning of Baptism, Calvin proved to be the most significant. Influenced by his legal background, Calvin viewed Baptism as a *seal* which confirmed God's promise and gave man the possibility of embracing the gift of God by an outward and visible action. Valuable as this emphasis on the pledge or seal can be, its tendency to be cold, legal, and abstract permitted the richer and deeper notes contained in the original symbolism to be either overlaid or lost. Progress towards recovery may be made by holding in close relationship to

one another the type of interpretation which Dillistone calls *analogical symbolism* with its emphasis upon the generative processes of Nature and the all-embracing activity of the Son of God within the world-organism, and that type contained in the *metaphysical symbolism* of Dodd and Cullmann with its emphasis upon the events of history and upon the eschatological acts of the Christ within the time-series. "The former of these types emphasizes the relation of baptism to the natural world and our whole investigation has revealed the importance of discovering afresh the significance of *water* within the rite; the latter of the types emphasizes the relation of baptism to historical event and again our investigation has shown how important a place the *passing through the waters* must occupy within a full baptismal ritual (p. 219f).

The central and most significant symbolic rite of the Church is the Christian Eucharist. Its origins are here seen to lie far back in the realm of ritual oblations and covenant ceremonies. The early eucharistic theology was chiefly governed by the passover and covenant pattern, but from the second century onwards, the ideas of oblation and life-giving food became prominent, culminating in the superstitious abuses that brought on the Reformation. Since the sixteenth century, the normative acts of the Eucharistic drama have been expressed and interpreted within the context of four leading cultural traditions: *Greek, Roman, Hebraic, and Jerusalemite*. The Jerusalemite tradition has stressed the Word of God as the permanent record of his mighty acts, and the covenant relationship as the environment of man's total life. The keynotes of Eucharistic theology within this particular tradition have ever been "in remembrance of me" and "till he come." The great redemption of the past is recalled in the present through the sign which also points to the even greater redemption to come. To this tradition "post-Reformation Protestant scholasticism" is assigned, and although Angli-

can Dillistone's sympathies lie in the direction of the *Greek and Hebraic* categories, he admits that the Reformed interpretation is simple and direct. In it, "the Eucharist is a sign and seal of redemption through the cross and a pledge of final salvation in the age to come. The word of God's promise is primary. The sacrament serves to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who have been brought within the covenant of grace (p. 283). His only real criticism of this interpretation is directed against its conviction that the word of God's redeeming grace has been spoken once and for all. This opens the way to rigidity and inflexibility.

Finally, Dillistone deals specifically with the question which has been lurking in the background all the while: "Are the Traditional Christian Symbols Outmoded?" It is easier to see why the problem is a particularly acute one for him, than to understand how he escapes an affirmative answer. Much of his study is given over to a demonstration of the organic connection between religious symbolism and Christianity; between the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist and the ancient symbolism of water and sacrifice. Once it is granted that the Christian sacraments cannot be truly understood apart from the ancient symbols of the race, the general agreement that modern man has lost contact with these symbols sounds the death knell of the sacraments. Dillistone refuses to draw so radical a conclusion, however, and feels that the Church is justified to continue its traditional usages until some new symbols can be discovered, more appealing and more compelling to our modern industrial society.

The tenuous nature of this conclusion reveals the basic weakness in any approach which loses sight of the uniqueness of Christianity in the history of religions. By their very nature, the sacraments of the Church have a place in the history of symbolism, but the uniqueness of the Christian symbols lies

in the fact that they derive their primary meaning, not from the "powerful images which belong to the penumbra of our conscious life," but from the historical events in the life of Jesus.

— JAMES I. COOK.

Religious Factors in Mental Illness, by Wayne E. Oates, New York: Association Press, 1955. Pp. vii-233. \$3.50.

Dr. Wayne Edward Oates is Professor of Psychology of Religion and Pastoral Care at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He has served as visiting professor of Pastoral Counseling at Union Seminary in New York City, and was formerly Chaplain of Kentucky State Hospital and Kentucky Baptist Hospital. It is out of a rich background of experience that he writes the present volume.

The author's purpose in writing this book is three-fold: First, to help the minister and the psychiatrist work together more closely in their treatment of the religious problems of the mentally ill. Second, he seeks to offer constructive suggestions that should aid in what Dr. Oates calls "a purification of religion itself." Third, to serve as a working guide to help in our understanding of the religious factors which affect mental disorders.

The author begins by discussing the "Hindering and Helping Power of Religion." More space is given to the presentation of the "hindering" than to the "helping" power of religion. The thesis of the chapter is stated thus, "Religion is just like dynamite; equally as dangerous as it is useful." This would not be true in the case of a mentally healthy person but it must be remembered that the author makes this observation as he looks through the eyes of one who is mentally ill. Dr. Oates presents several case studies to illustrate his thesis. On the basis of these studies he comes to the following conclusions:

1. Religion can often mar the mental health of people if the parents use religious precepts solely as a means of domineering over their children.
2. That the absence of any form of control and the allowance of unbridled freedom in a parent-child relationship can be equally harmful.
3. Religious affiliation with a particular group has little or no correlation with mental illness.
4. The manner in which religious teachings are presented has much to do with the way he accepts, rejects or falls into interminable conflict over the teachings.
5. Of particular importance in this experience of the communication of religious teaching are the mother and father of the individual.

"Self-Deception and Self-Encounter" is the subject which is next discussed. "The manner in which a man utilizes his religion—whether it be to enrich and ennoble his life or to excuse his selfishness and cruelty, or to rationalize his delusions and hallucinations, or to clothe himself in the comforting illusion of omnipotence—is a commentary on his mental health" (page 33). Both the minister and the psychiatrist have a task "to discover the sense hidden in the nonsense of the patient" (page 34). The mentally ill patient needs a minister and a psychiatrist who will take his ideas seriously without taking them too seriously.

The conflicts of a person who is mentally ill fall into one of several categories: the Unpardonable Sin fear, the battle of Flesh versus Spirit, the Unforgiving Legalist, the Confusion of the Identification of God with Self, the End of the World Complex, the Messianic Idea. How should a pastor deal with such people? How frequently should he visit them? How long should the visits last? The author recommends, on the basis of his experience, that pastors

should spend a little time frequently rather than much time occasionally with such persons.

Dr. Oates continues by saying that religious culture affects the making or the breaking of personality. He discusses in detail the religious tensions which appear in mental illness in the crisis of an interfaith or a mixed marriage. The problems which are in Protestant-Catholic marriages arise over issues as to whether to send children to parochial or public schools, which Bible to use in the home, whether the non-Protestant will be permitted to engage in family prayers, the use of money in church contributions, and the choice of Catholic or non-Catholic friends. This discussion is one of the most practical in the entire book. Every pastor deals with similar situations throughout his ministry. The author suggests a guided program of counseling for those who are contemplating a Protestant-Catholic marriage. What should be the role of the Protestant minister for the counselees?

1. A "threatless" and noncoercive relationship, which provides more or less of a haven from the intense pressures placed upon them by parents and friends.
2. Provide them with as much information as can be obtained about the problems involved in interfaith marriages. (Oates' discussion at this point is very good.)
3. Appeal to the persons involved for a delay of time in which to think through the major issues.
4. A careful preservation of the basic Protestant teaching of the autonomy of the individual soul before God.

The author continues by discussing "Healthy and Unhealthy Religion." The chapter is highly illustrative as Dr. Oates presents several guides to serve as aids in determining whether a person's religion is healthy or unhealthy. The counselor must ask himself, What are the advantages of the illness, particularly what are the advantages of

these ideas to the patient? What function do they serve in his life? Moreover, in the case of a mentally sick person the patient is likely to "spin" an estoteric pattern of private thinking which has meaning for him alone, and by which he judges all others, breaking relationship with them if they do not agree with him. This helps us to understand why the mentally ill live in a world of their own. "In essence, then, healthy religion binds people together in such a way that their individuality is enabled both to be realized and to be consecrated to the total community of relationships to which they belong. This is a religion of mature and responsible relatedness, which does not interpret disdain for people as the call of God to withdraw from or attack other people" (page 113).

There is a good presentation of "Blighted Religious Experience." In this situation the religious experience of persons reaches a point of sterility or non-productiveness. All the while the other processes of life go on because of external necessity. It produces a "sour" attitude toward life. What are some of the situations which cause this blight? Oates suggests several:

1. The military drafting of young men causes this blighting to appear in the religious living of late teen-agers.
2. It occurs in situations of severe bereavement.
3. Ministers and theological professors may become "blighted" through disillusionment or monotony.
4. Religious blighting appears in the religious experience of wives and mothers who have deep religious impulses but are tied down at home by irresponsible husbands.
5. Religious blight can result from the stunted religious growth of persons who have been reared in legalistic religious environments.

Up to this point the book is rather negative. In every situation there is a

clear-cut analysis of the problems involved without a solution being offered. Oates now presents a chapter on "Religion in the Therapy of Mental Illness." A pastor, like the psychologist, must obtain factual diagnosis rather than community opinion about the mentally ill. The author says very pointedly that communities have their own diagnoses and prejudices, which must be carefully sifted from the facts. Oates interjects a word of caution to the effect that ministers and churches must not seek to "pass the buck" for pastoral care, religious instruction, and theological guidance to the psychiatrist. In making a referral it should never be an attempt to abandon the patient to psychiatry, referring thereby away from the church. Rather, it should be the church calling in specialized help in its ministry to the whole personality.

Oates well says, "The character of a person's god has something to do with the kind of person he becomes; as Ian Stevenson has put it, people change because of having met, participated with, and chosen to be like a living person who is mature. The same thing happens in reverse when a person becomes mentally sick—by positive affection or negative fear, he has bound himself to an immature ideal, a person, or a cause that is less than infinite in the capacity for growth, spiritual refreshment, and the renewal of life" (page 167).

The author utilizes considerable space in presenting the positive functions of religion in the lives of mentally sick:

1. The minister should perceive the nature of the god of his patient. He must wean the patient from his household gods, his confusion of loyalties, his grudges. He must help him discover the Lord who does not faint or become weary.
2. The church has a responsibility toward the mentally ill. Healthy religious experience is possible in the church. Its members should be bound together through mutual love and understanding.

3. The church ought to challenge the respect, enlist the devotion, and gain the wholehearted dedication of the psychiatrist to the God it proclaims.

—HENRY A. MOUW.

The Pastor's Hospital Ministry,
by Richard K. Young, Nashville:
Broadman Press, 1954. Pp. xvi-139.
\$2.50.

It was my privilege to take a six-weeks' Clinical Training Course at the University of Michigan hospital before entering the hospital work. It would be a wonderful thing if every seminary student could take such a course before graduation. The Episcopal Church makes such a course a condition for graduation for its seminary students.

To anyone contemplating such a course this book will serve as an excellent preparation for an advanced course in procedures in visiting the sick and in the counselling process. To those who are not able to take such a clinical training course under the supervision of an accredited chaplain, this book will be a great help in pastoral calling at home as well as in hospitals.

This book is written by a man who has served in the North Carolina State Hospital as a chaplain since 1946. In the foreword Dr. Lloyd J. Thompson writes: "Knowing Dr. Young personally and having worked with him in many instances, it is my opinion that he is presenting here an up-to-date factual treatise and guide as well as a down-to-earth philosophy that should serve well all of us who are trying to help our fellow man find the way toward health and happiness." "Man needs religion and particularly when he is sick," writes Dr. M. A. Christian. Just how to meet that need best, in that crisis, is the burden of this book. A splendid evangelical note runs through the volume. The author's purpose in writing is stated on page xv of the Introduction: "One [objective] is to stimulate

interest in the field of pastoral care in order that more facilities may be provided for training purposes and, consequently, more emphasis placed upon the healing ministry of the pastor. The second objective is to present to the pastor, as practically as possible, some suggestions for improving his skill in the care of souls as he works in his own local hospital. The ideas expressed in this book have been wrought out and tested during the seven-year period that I have spent as chaplain in a medical center."

Ministers are more welcome in hospitals than ever before. "With the increasing recognition of the effect which the emotions have upon the bodily functions (psychosomatic medicine), more and more pastors and doctors are learning that they can be mutually helpful in their common field of service to the sick person."

The hospitals constitute a real challenge to the church. "The care of the sick has in this decade grown into a matter of national interest and public policy. . . . Jesus commissioned his followers to preach the gospel and to heal the sick. In the early church the ministry of healing was vital, as well as the ministry of the Word. Yet Christians since the days of the apostles have had to look back with wistful longing, hoping for the day when religion would again be closely related to healing as such. The opportunity which exists in this generation to enter into a total ministry to the total person is the greatest which the church has faced since Jesus set the example."

The hospitals furnish the minister an unusual opportunity to serve Christ, the author declares. "All of this is to say that the pastor can supplement and complement the doctor's work as they labor together in their local hospital. Because of his day-by-day contacts with his congregation, the pastor may have an even finer perspective of a patient's personality patterns, emotional drives, and will to live than the doctor has thus far acquired."

The author reminds us constantly that God has created us with a delicate interrelationship between body and soul. "The knowledge that God cares for each of us and that he is always ready to forgive can be a potent factor in the healing of disease in man's body as well as in his soul."

The author offers some very practical suggestions to pastors relative to hospitals. "The pastor should devote special attention to the hospital in his community. Some ministerial associations have worked out a plan whereby the ministers in the community divide the responsibility for being on call for emergencies which arise in the local hospital." The appointment by one of our western Classes of a minister to visit the sick of Reformed persuasion at the Mayo Clinic is a fine illustration. The Evangelical Ministerial Union of Grand Rapids is also sponsoring one full-time chaplain for the hospitals and two part-time chaplains, one for the convalescent homes and another for the T.B. hospital.

In chapter two, "The Pastor and Hospital Personnel," the author offers some excellent advice. "The effectiveness of the pastor's ministry depends largely upon his ability to coordinate his services with the work of other professional people in the hospital where he is visiting."

The author also offers some splendid suggestions, in the form of "rules of conduct," by which the pastor should be regulated in his relationship with the doctor. The seven DON'T'S given by Dr. Wingate Johnson of North Carolina are worth the price of the whole book.

The relationship between the pastor and the psychiatrist is also discussed. He mentions the reason for "some of the failures of psychiatry." It is, he believes, because of psychiatry's failure "to recognize that the spirit of man is as essential to his health as are his body and mind."

In chapter three he discusses the subject "Visiting the Sick," in which he

sets forth some simple rules in relation to closed doors, "No Visitors" signs, "Isolation" placards, etc. He warns against becoming an "emotional germ carrier."

He sets forth the pastor's *resources* in visiting the sick, which consist not only in prayer, the Bible, his own personality, but also his role as listener. The four phases of this latter are effectively set forth by Russell Dicks.

In chapter four he sets forth "The Ministry of Counseling." This is a priceless chapter. It describes five separate interviews with a patient and also a "complete criticism of these interviews."

In chapter five he sets forth "The Specific Ministry of the Pastor." 1. Ministering to the surgical patient. He lists four major fears. 2. Ministering to the convalescent. "It is not an overstatement to say that fully fifty per cent of the problems of the acute stages of an illness and seventy-five per cent of the difficulties of convalescence have their primary origin not in the body, but in the mind of the patient." He also notes

the three major problems of convalescents and how to minister to them. 3. Ministering to the dying. He gives the pastor eight excellent suggestions for dealing with the dying. 4. Ministering to the bereaved. He discusses the several symptoms of *normal* grief, but also sets forth seven reactions in *morbid* grief, and also offers excellent suggestions in dealing with them.

While there may be, here and there, some points that might be questioned, on the whole this book is well written and can be of real service to every minister of the gospel. After using the procedures I learned at the Clinical Training Course, I found this book not only to be an excellent "refresher course," but a source book of much new material. If all ministers would follow the excellent suggestions in the book, doctors and nurses would no longer need to fear that the minister might "upset" the emotional and proverbial "applecart" — as many have done — but they would welcome his visits to the hospital.

— HARRY HOFFS.

WRITERS IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

Bruce M. Metzger is professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary. His article is one of a series of three lectures on "Aspects of the Teaching Ministry of Jesus Christ." These lectures were delivered at our seminary January 18-19.

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